joy"

of sickness and sin, to bring the true al being to men. on may well be light which pene- ght of the humble teen hundred d which, later on, and consolation th thousands through nistry of Christ Je- ared? The answer is, n have permitted the mortal sense to blur the Christ. . . . Christ, Truth, un- ded, will eliminate greed from hu- ss, and establish

Christ Jesus was kingdom of God l he do this? By ty of human be- ng was a casting ss of some false no connection in God's image. of an electric darkness from ght of spiritual knowledge of ls false human did not recog- proved its un- knowledge of

demur to the complaint of the plaintiff or the plaintiff will apply to the court for the relief demanded in the complaint.

This 7th day of December, 1942.

J. E. SWAIN,
Clerk of the Superior Court
of Buncombe County

No. 8 Dec. 11 18 25 Jan. 1

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

North Carolina
Buncombe County
In the Superior Court
Arthur Johnson, Plaintiff
vs.
Lucille Johnson, Defendant

The defendant above named will take notice that an action entitled as above has been commenced in the Superior Court of Buncombe County, North Carolina, by the plaintiff against the defendant for divorce from the bonds of matrimony now existing between them; that the said defendant will further take notice that she is required to appear at the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court for Buncombe County and answer or demur to the complaint in said action on the 15th day of January, 1943, or within thirty days thereafter or the relief demanded in the complaint will be granted.

This the 9th day of December, 1942.

J. E. SWAIN,
Clerk Superior Court,
Buncombe County

No. 13 Dec. 11 18 25 Jan. 1

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF SUMMONS

State of North Carolina
County of Buncombe
In the Superior Court
C. R. Pace, Plaintiff
vs.
Christine Royster Pace, Defendant

The defendant, Christine Royster Pace, will take notice that an action entitled as above has been commenced in the Superior Court of Buncombe County, by the plaintiff against the defendant to obtain an absolute divirce from the bonds of matrimony on the grounds of two years separation; that the said defendant will further take notice that she is required to appear at the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, at the Court House, in Asheville, North Carolina, within thirty days after the completion of the service of summons by publication in this cause or demur to the complaint

THE NEWS PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK

Continued from page one

istant. At fourteen, she was teaching on her own and two ears later entered Peabody Col- for teachers, in Nashville. er graduation and a time of ching in San Antonio, Texas, went to Radcliffe College, mbridge, where she met Pe- am Dargan, a young South rolinian in his senior year at arvard."

Long before she had begun grow up, Olive had seen sor- w and suffering, and she be- an early to ask "What's the mat- r with the world?" At twelve, she tried to persuade her father to "do something" to improve the condition of prisoners. When he did not, for reasons that must be clear to most fathers, she decided she would have to learn to do that herself. Much as she enjoyed learning philosophy at Radcliffe from George Santayana, she found Political Economy " a barren experience, giving no answer to the burning question." Now, Political Economy was not a polite subject for ladies to study, even in the twenties, and it must have been a shock to all right-thinking people to see a young lady straining her mind with such a masculine preoccupation before the World War. But Olive Tilford already had a high purpose, and a determination that carried her through. She learned that reformists are not always popular, but artists, if successful, are apt to be. She decided to become such a literary artist that her work would be read by all. Then, with consummate skill, she would make the world ashamed of its crimes ,and cause humanity to "Shatter the sorry scheme of things entire and remold it nearer heart's desire." Marriage, she saw, would take up a lot of time better spent in writing to accomplish her modest objective, and when she left Boston to teach in Nova Scotia, she left four suitors behind her, with no forwarding address.

But because she was satisfied with nothing short of perfection in her teaching, that took too much time, too, and she returned to Boston to be a stenographer. There, in search of a bust of Keats, she went to an old curiosity shop where she met Pegram Dargan, who was looking for a statue of Venus. Neither of them found the statues, but he must have found his Venus, for when she moved to Blue Ridge, Georgia, he followed her and "camped on the doorstep" until she found her poet and married him.

The couple went to New York City, "where they lived high up in a little apartment with six windows toward the Hudson and wasted a lot of time writing sonnets to sunsets over the Palisades. In the seventh year of marriage, they discovered the mountains of Western North Carolina and modestly wanted one for themselves, feeling that here amid so much beauty it would be easy to live poetry as well as write it. Optimists indeed!" according to Mrs. Dargan.

Before leaving New York, Mrs. Dargan had published her first book, containing with two others the poetic drama, "Carlotta," written about the ill-starred Empress of Mexico. This work had received enough econiums to turn a young writer's ear, but Mrs. Dargan only said quietly that she could "do better than that." All she needed was quiet and freedom on the high ridge farm, overlooking the Nantahala and Little Tennessee, which the couple had enthusiastically acquired. John White Chadwick had written of "Carlotta" that it "marked the high tide in blank verse since Shakespeare" and that was encouragement enough. She could go on. Her second book, "Lords and Lovers," scored even higher with critics and the author still thinks of it as her best. It contained a double play in blank verse, each part a five act drama complete in itself, with the two parts making one dramatic whole, a feat which excited much admiration among the reviewers. There was also a prose play in the book, portraying a fragment of the Russian Revolution of 1905, with a Tolstoyan non-resistant as the protagonist. (Shades of Gandhi!) This play had a varied fortune. It was bought for production by Sothern and Marlowe, but not put on. Sothern's friend, Sir Henry Irving, had a son who came along with a play on the same subject, and professional as well as friendly loyalty required that Mrs. Dargan's play give place to Irving's. When the Irving play failed, Mrs. Dargan was too nice to chuckle. In the meantime, Aline Bernstein had purchased the rights to the Dargan play, then for some reason gave up Broadway for California and a domestic life. The play, though unproduced, was making money. A third purchaser appeared, Bertha Kalich, a very fine actress, but she wanted to dress as a boy and stroll through the play as the romantic young violinist, to which Mrs. Dargan would not agree. Mrs. Dargan learned later that Julia Marlowe had planned to do the same thing. The play was finally given as the first offering of the Neighborhood Playhouse, launching that fine venture of Alice and Irene Lewisohn on its years of success. Sarah Cowell LeMoyne, directed the play and wrote to Mrs. Dargan, then in England, "There was not room on the lower east side for all the uptown limousines."

After the death of her husband, Mrs. Dargan undertook to carry on farm operations with the help of her three tenant families. Making a ridge farm decently support more than a score of people required the work of all hands including her own. The "views" were fine, but production demanded something less immaterial. The work absorbed her almost to the exclusion of writing, but she liked it. Today she looks with more pride on her record as a genuine "dirt farmer" than the fact that she wrote blank verse which made the dean of American critics hail her as "A new poet! There is hardly a page from which some mellow conceit, some melod- jewel, informed with the crossed-fires of a singularly opulent imagination cannot be culled."

But farming took its toll. For some years she wrote nothing that demanded long periods of concentration. Lyrics, however, continued to bubble and found a welcome in Scribners, the Century, Atlantic and McClure's, sometimes at the generous rate of a hundred dollars a poem. For a rather lengthy dramatic poem, the Century paid the topnitch price of two hundred and fifty dollars which was immediately applied to the beloved but ravenous farm. She shared all the hardships and pleasures of the little ridge colony and lost her old literary perspective. Plato, in his Sicilian days, chronicled in one of her five-act verse plays, did not seem so important as old gran'pap, the head of the farm clan. She had gone into the highlands, with a vow never to write about the people, but with her easy adaptability she became so much a part of the life that she felt she could write of it with no reproachful sense of exploitation. The frailties and nobilities of her neighbors were of the same human brand found the world over, with the hovering charm of earlier centuries added. To capture this before it passed from life under the wheels of progress, became a fascinating stunt.

Aiming high, she sent her first sketch to the Atlantic. It was eagerly accepted, and more sketches were asked for than she could supply, but every now and then when the farm purse was skin empty, she would send one in. These sketches, first published as a collection under the title "Highland Annals" have recently been "streamlined" by the author, illustrated by Bayard Wooten, and re-issued under the title from one of her own poems, "From My Highest Hill".

Early Good Neighbor

Mrs. Dargan's once unladylike interest in politics has ~~given~~ imparted to her an almost prophetic sense of what is to come. She wrote a play on the Mexican Revolution of 1910, called "The Mortal Gods" in blank verse, but she says "the new wine did not go well in the old bottles" for "propaganda in art had not at that time found a place in the hearts of publishers" and "American critics turned a cautiously deaf ear to the book." But in England, it was another story. Charlotte Despard, the famous sister of Marshal French, Chief of the British army, was leader of the woman's movement then raging in London. She spread a review of the play over the entire front page of her newspaper, "The Vote," and entitled it "Victors of Tomorrow". Now that the erstwhile revolutionaries of Mexico have become the Victors of Today, Mrs. Dargan may reflect with pleasure that her early offering made "The Good Neighbor Policy" a bit easier when it was adopted as a fundamental doctrine of our government.

But no American could look on Mexico's difficulties without seeing our own, and Mrs. Dargan had started thinking about Labor's place in the world long before there was any National Labor Relations Board, or other "Bill of Rights" for Labor. As a young girl, she had [heard] Henry George, on his last round of lectures, and Single Tax had opened a new gate to thousands of paths yet untrod even in thought. One of them led, in the mind of this creative artist to "Call Home the Heart", a novel published here and in England, the Maxim Gorky aw It dealt with the vangu Labor movement and w fillment of her old plan tic achievement as well terpiece of propaganda her critics called it a ian Novel in Lyrical was followed by "A S Rolling", which seeme a novel of even greater

We have mentioned of Mrs. Dargan's w of which would have celebrity. Naturally, in contact with m celebrities and m among them, but come only rarely and in her conversation. ebrity herself, she co she is disqualified and requests to be enter various "Who's Who's" out all over the cou respects "Who's Who ica" as a useful instit it was only after years tation that she gave t sary data. "If I have thing of record," she sa will take care of it aft dead, and if I haven't, take care of that, too."

A kind heart and the it makes upon her time worst enemies of this a few hours stolen from perhaps a few chapters book that will help the after its shaking, to settle foundation that will mean er base for happiness for us.

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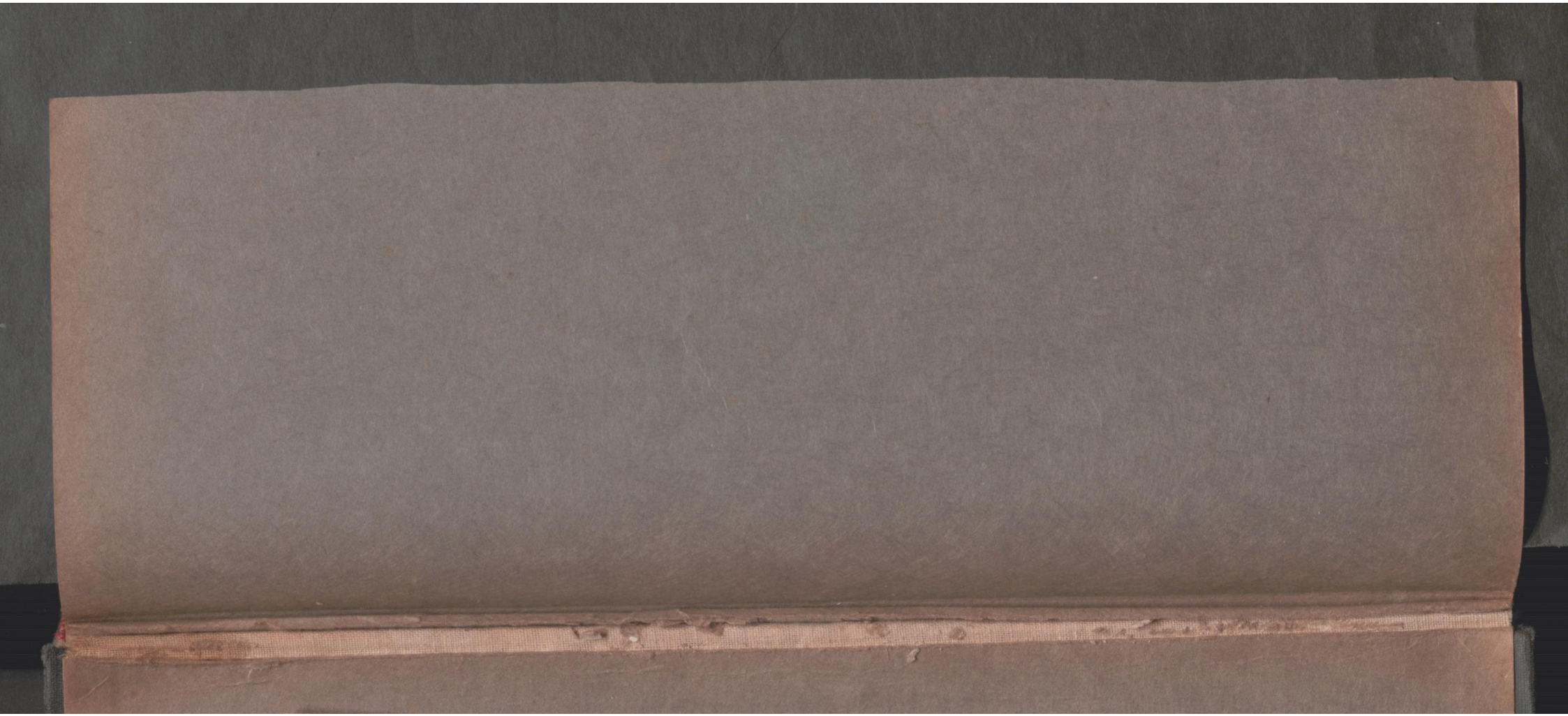

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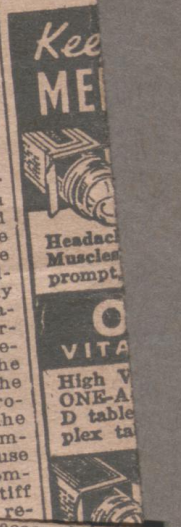

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The

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A Carolina Lutanist

Lute and Furrow

By Olive Tilford Dargan. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $1.75.

Mrs. Dargan has already made her secure place among American poets, and if the age will endure to hear mention of Parnassus, we should like to say that she has built her path well up along its slopes.

In this latest volume of verse, she preserves the modernity which has been an outstanding trait of all her previous work, even when, as in the plays, she dealt with things and times of the longest long ago, and notwithstanding the fact that she never makes a turn for the mere sake of being up-to-date.

The inherent quality of the Carolina countryside pervades the poems, as a whole; not only in its physical features and moods, but in the people it environs, which are strictly part and parcel of the scene in which she shows them. Although the first poem, naming the book, seems to state a controversy between the pen and the plow, it is there set at rest, for throughout the lute either follows the furrow or the furrow feeds the lute.

Hers a Lyrical Gift

The present book may be said to be peculiarly representative of Mrs. Dargan's gift, which is essentially lyrical, and her instrument indubitably the lute. There is no somber profundity as of the viol, no rolling of organ tones, little hint of the passionate poignancy of the violin, but whether the poem is of human nature or human love, the messages of field or wave, the beating wings of human aspiration to be set free of earthliness, or the grace of spiritual yearning, her touch is true and her keynote is never lost.

At the high water mark of a remarkably uniform excellence stands the poem "Francesca." Not Edward King at Milton's hands, nor Keats at the hands of Shelley, was laureled with more felicity than this girl of 13, here presented in a portraiture that lacks little of perfection in its kind. One is not comparing the poems; that would be to compare the plucked string to the orchestra, and "Francesca" is of a delicate individuality which could not be brought into the atmosphere of Lycidas or Adonais. No Splendors and Desires and Adorations are invoked in its cameo-cut lines; there is no questioning of fountains and floods; yet the "tender stops of various quills" were never more deftly touched, at the impulse of pure affection, than in this artistically molded tribute.

Francesca

It is not a poet who is celebrated, but one so possessed by the beauty of existence as to seem its embodiment.

My wand is she that smites
Open the prophet's wall;
My arrow in the sun,
Sped for no fall. . . .

Far down a world wound-red
All unappalled she looks;
Where I stare barrenly
She beauty plucks
From an untrampled bed,
Till suddenly I see.

And for eulogy, could words say better than this?—

But she was beauty; planets swing,
And ages toil, that one like her
May make dust sing.

There are poems in other keys, quite as distinctive. Have you ever felt the finality in the eye of a single wild flower, when carefully scrutinized? Here you find it expressed:

And if a daisy look at me,
The wheeling world
Seems then to stand
Contentedly
At journey's end.

There is a large vigor in the "Ballad of Trafalgar Square," and a deep human dictate in "Burning Bridges," and an outgoing quest for world service in "The Sea Asks."

I have smoothed out my waves
That ache for the touch of the keels;
I have mated with the blue sky;
My winds are feather fans half shut.
Let me carry again
The bread of the world.

Free Verse Form Controlled

As for the free verse forms in which some of the poems are done, if it had always been handled with the certainty and control which Mrs. Dargan exercises, we should all have been freer to admire and emulate it. She uses it; it never runs away with her. For an instance:

I lift my hand to the wide night,
Lest the dark fall upon him;
With my brooding shoulders, stronger than hills,
I bend back the winds;
I, patient with the babble of gods;
Unconcerned with the gossip on the stairs of night;
Making a cradle of the vast, dusk leagues;
And my careless foot
Is on the hyacinth wreath,
As my kisses shatter the light on his hair,
The hair of my little child.

There are always more songs to sing, and Olive Tilford Dargan is one of those who make us glad that is so.

M. R.

C. S. Monitor - 1922

MRS. DARGAN'S POEMS

PATH FLOWER AND OTHER POEMS. By Olive Dargan. Charles Scribner's Sons. $1.25.

A VOLUME of lyric poetry by Olive Dargan is an event long anticipated by her admirers, for it was certain that a poet capable of the fine, free, vigorous lines and the richly textured beauty of Mrs. Dargan's dramas must have lyric gifts of no common order.

It is gratifying to have one's prophetic sense confirmed, but in her volume, "Path Flower and Other Poems." Mrs. Dargan has done much more than this—she has given a surprise to her most sanguine prophets. One scarcely expected from a poet who has written almost wholly in the dramatic form such spontaneous lyric utterance as this. For it is in the singing lyric, the purest and most elemental form, that Mrs. Dargan is at her best. Where the technique is least elaborate the impulse is surest. In the title poem, in "The Game," "Safe," and other lyrics of a crystaline simplicity one meets Mrs. Dargan upon her own ground.

"Path Flower" is a lyric in which one finds something of the mood of Francis Thompson's "Daisy"; behind its freshness and naïvete one sees the tragic face of life. The pathos of the little starveling lured afield to find the spring is told in exquisite lines which tempt quotation, but the poem is too long for our space and it would be unfair to dismember it. The motif just hinted in this lyric is developed much more fully in others, and becomes the keynote to Mrs. Dargan's volume. It is the mood of sympathy, of service, the social spirit of the age.

> Life is the search of God
> For His own unity.
> I walk stone-bare 'till all are shod.
> No gold may sandal me—

might be taken as a typical passage from the volume. The opening couplet of this passage illustrates another quality of Mrs. Dargan's work, the gift of arresting you with some epigrammatic expression, the power to fix in a line or two something salient and unforgettable.

Mrs. Dargan is aware of her age, and one meets the great issues in her pages, but from the standpoint of poetry these are not the subjects which most command her. "Magdalen to Her Poet," for example, is excellent sociology, but unillumined poetry, save in flashes. "Little Daughters," depicting the sacrifice of young girls, is much more successful artistically, but even this shows its mechanism, and one is not moved as by the lyrics in which one meets the poet face to face. Mrs. Dargan has so much to give, she has touched life at so many points and her spiritual sense is so true, that when she speaks most intimately we have poetry of rare beauty. For poetry is imagination and emotion; it must have the magic of revelation, it must bring the familiar word as a message from afar, and Mrs. Dargan can do this and does do it so often in her lyrics that we are more grateful for one of these personal notes than for any incursion into sociology.

Of the individual poems, "Sorolla" is a magical thing, a lyric where the most evanescent play of beauty is arrested and made permanent. Then there is "Old Fairingdown," a little etching of an English village, where every stroke is true. Here, for example, is a typical picture:

> Each mute old house is more old than the other,
> And each wears its vines like ragged hair
> Round the half-blind windows.
> If a child should laugh, if a girl should sing,
> Would the houses rub the vines from their eyes
> And listen and live?

There is "A Ballad," a valiant proclamation of a woman to a man; the lovely sonnet "Rosemary," the profound note of "The Last Shall Be First," indeed these lyrics cover so wide a range that it is difficult in a brief comment to detach the most characteristic poems or to isolate the quality which makes Mrs. Dargan's work most distinctly her own. One cannot fail, however, to note the delicate psychology, the pure and unaffected diction, the feeling for beauty which marks them all, and one may say without reserve that no current work in verse bears more unmistakably the poet's credentials.

JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE.

FROM WORLD,
New York City.
JUL 21 1922

GIVING A JULY THOUGHT TO POETS OF THE DAY

A. Noyes on Watchers of the Sky—The Way of Mr. Drinkwater in Verse—Olive Tilford Dargan a Poetess of Real Human Emotion.

Reviews by PENDRAGON.

ESTABLISHED 1881
From
HERALD
Boston, Mass.
JUN 24 1922



OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN

Her Poems, "Lute and Furrow," Are Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.



OLIVE T DARGAN

North Carolina poetess whose "Lute and Furrow" book of verses has just won her new praises for her truly human song.

"Lute and Furrow" (Scribners), by Olive Tilford Dargan, has more of the essential fire, but one cannot say that it is an improvement on her last, for it is not. It is more sentimental in spots, is also less deft in craftsmanship. With much beauty in lines and stanzas, there are yet no poems flawless as a whole.

What is found in her work to make it worth while is human emotion, normal, not affected, and bits of description that come recognizably true.

Take for example the stanza with which the title poem opens:

The winter has grown so still
I can stand at the foot of the hill
Where the stream beneath the bridge
Is dry as a heart after grief,
And hear at the top of the ridge
The wind as it lifts a leaf.

BOOK REV'W DIGEST (White Plains, N. Y.

JAN 1915

DARGAN, OLIVE TILFORD (MRS. PEGRAM DARGAN). Path-flower and other verses. *$1.25 Scribner

"It is gratifying to have one's prophetic sense confirmed, but in this volume Mrs. Dargan has done much more than this—she has given a surprise to her most sanguine prophets. One scarcely expected from a poet who has written almost wholly in the dramatic form such spontaneous lyric utterance as this. For it is in the singing lyric, the purest and most elemental form, that Mrs. Dargan is at her best. Where the technique is least elaborate the impulse is surest . . . 'Path-flower' is a lyric in which one finds something of the mood of Francis Thompson's 'Daisy.' . . . Mrs. Dargan is aware of her age, and one meets the great issues in her pages, but from the standpoint of poetry these are not the subjects which most command her."—N Y Times

"In the 'Ballad,' 'Magdalen to her poet,' and 'Little daughters,' Mrs. Dargan has reached the highest heights of pure poetic vision. In 'Magdalen to her poet,' we have one of the half dozen great odes in American poetry; in 'Little daughters,' the greatest lyrical rendering of a modern social vision, and in the 'Ballad,' a sacrament of spiritual devotion offered by woman to man." W: S. Braithwaite

+ Boston Transcript p4 D 12 '14 1550w

"One cannot fail to note the delicate psychology, the pure and unaffected diction, the feeling for beauty which marks them all, and one may say without reserve that no current work in verse bears more unmistakably the poet's credentials." J. B. Rittenhouse

+ N Y Times 19:581 D 20 '14 770w

Globe

solemnity which invest man's task of living she understands:

Who knows how lone the sea must flow
Is lonelier than the sea;
A greater than the hills is he
Who feels them pass from sand to sand;
And who knows Death, to Death may go
With almoner's hand.

Despite some material whose inclusion is questionable, and some unevenness, Mrs. Dargan makes a distinct and valuable addition to the rapidly growing volume of notable American verse. H. D.

FROM

OCT 19 1922

Evening Globe
New York

From local legend to cosmic emotion, garbed sometimes in trim sonnet and sometimes in the most tattered of free verse, Olive Tilford Dargan has led her muse in the third published volume of her lyric work. It is a far cry from the restrained beauty of "Cycle Rim" to the drab story of the young, overburdened mother presented in "Released" and an almost equal distance between "Path Flowers" and the frank Ezra Pound-like phrasing of "Burned Bridges," so that even Mrs. Dargan's stoutest admirers may be pardoned for arching their eyebrows now and again over the present volume, "Lute and Furrow" (Scribner's).

"Lute and Furrow."

In the first division, which gives the book its name, are most of the poems in conventional verse forms. And all through them one is brought up short by such flashes of beauty as Mrs. Dargan has shown her readers before—

There is time for the laugh we would fling,
For the wiping of dust from our stars,
For a bee on his marketing wing,
For the forester wind's wild wares. . . .

Then the weight tied fast to the heart;
The doubt that deadens the dawn;
And the raining sting and the smart
Of invisible whips laid on.

Or her lines on the death of a little girl who "lifted her eyes like two hours of June":

But she was Beauty; planets swing
And ages toil that one like her
May make dust sing. . . .

There are ventures somewhat in the style of Sandburg or Masters, however, which are hardly so successful. And there are a number of things in the second section reminiscent of the manner of Stephen Crane: as forceful, perhaps, but hardly more satisfactory, poetically.

And then she wins you back again with such a splendid thing as her deeply sensed poem on the squalid industrialism of the English Black Country, taking you back to Mrs. Browning's "Cry of the Children" with the poignancy of her closing lines.

These strong, who for the weak make beauty sure,
How long will they endure
An earth of ashes and a sky of brass?

It is the same alert sympathy that caused her to write "Evvie's Mother" and some of the other local sketches, but how much more effectively voiced!

Half the fifty poems would have to be quoted to give an adequate idea of Mrs. Dargan's range. Her eye and heart and mind are equally alive to bird and flower and tree and brook and shifting cloud, while her spirit infuses strength and courage into each lyric, and frequently a quality of daring not unlike the amazing Emily Dickinson. And the dignity and

ANSCRIPT, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1916

Day === An American P

uence of Memorial Sonnets



Olive Tilford Dargan

Next Page

from preceding page
– Transcript –
Boston

Olive Tilford Dargan's Outspoken Tribute of Love to the Honor of One Drowned at Sea

By W. S. B.

THE Shakspearean sonnet has been voyaging for three hundred years over the oceans of poetic minds, a craft more subtle than stately, shaped for merchandise of costly price rather than for cargoes of necessary commodities, but on very few occasions sailing full-rigged and with a full tonnage of wares. The original model cleared from the deepest harbor of human imagination, touched at all the continents of human experience, unloading its inexhaustible and eternal merchandise, the costly wares of passion: the cloth o' gold of love, jewels of bitterness and pain, princely silks of friendship, and rare and magical perfumes of the mind rising in triumph over emotional disaster. The model was copied in the days when the original flourished on the morning sea of English poetry; but none carried such a merchandise as that ship which sailed from the harbor of Shakspeare's heart. Since, there have been brave attempts to gather as costly a merchandise for newer copies of the famous model. The bounteous resources of life have left no lack of supplies, but few minds and hearts have been so rich in passion and imagination to purchase such a cargo as the story of Shakspeare's love.

O what a lover must thou be, old Time,
With so much beauty to thy bosom folded!
The queen that reigned o'er monarchies of rhyme,
And by new worship ever newly moulded;
With all the Helens of the lyreless Troys,
Sisters of Laura, Beatrice, Eloise,
Who shone on worshippers denied the voice
To set their name 'mong song's divinities!
And happy thou, my Dear, who now dost share
The secret of Time's eyes. O, smile thou must,
As Pity smileth, seeing mortals here
Laying another song on Helen's dust.
But of thy joy I dream unjealously,
Knowing in all they loves thou lovest me.

The sequence from which the above sonnet is quoted indicates an approach, in the quality of substance and instinctive surety of form, to the Shakspearean masterpiece, that between it and our time it must be ranked with the few supreme achievements thrown off like planets from that sun. "The Cycle's Rim" is a sequence holding the outspoken passion of love and memory for "One Drowned at Sea." This love is a great essence, an essence that takes on many elements, giving to them various subtleties of associated memories with the world, and with those complications of mystery that weave the passions of the soul and the philosophic insight of the mind into the web of life. You get a clarified and lucid surface, but a brooding and mysterious undercurrent: a prodigal wealth of impulses at the bottom of the mind and heart. In the opening sonnet how simply the poet presents her task, but note what goes into that presentation, mat of carefully chosen imagery, sound colored with the plumage of thought, and kept in that appropriate key of controllable pain which the heart that knows wisdom in the shape of beauty, alone expresses:

Deep lies thy body, jewel of the sea,
Locked down with wave on wave. Pearl-drift among
The coral towers, and yet not thee, not thee!
So lightly didst thou mount, blue rung o'er rung,
The lustred ladder rippling from that land
Of strangely boughed and wooing wildernesses.
Province of dream unwaning, dream yet banned
From sleepers in the sun; but thou, as presses
The lark that feels his song, sped to thy sky.
O unrepressed! If thou wouldst choose be gone,
What sea-charm then could stay thee, bid thee lie
Too deep for cock-crow earth or heaven's dawn?
Yet must I chant these broken, mortal staves,
And lay my leaf of laurel on the waves.

This "leaf of laurel" has many wonders. Out of the dark earth has come that vital power which makes its face toward the sun know the fulfilment of these words in the twenty-third sonnet that appeals:

O God, what tumult buried is, unguessed
As strife that rends a smiling-windowed house,
Within that hidden room, a woman's breast,
When agony on guard must make fair bows
To casual fortune.

But this leaf, too, has had its inexplicable wonders of the clear, warm sunlight, and from it flows into many a line those untouchable deeps of joys, those elusive flashes of beauty that cannot die:

Here is no beauty I may look upon
And think not of thee; for all ways we went,
And every way did bud or jewel own
That for a moment made thine eyes content
And spill sweet sun to mine.

Recollection creeps in with its glowing light again and again:

Then out of night
Your laughter covered me like ointment spilled;
Around me pealed your words, a torrent light,
And my sick soul rose up, virgin and healed,
On radiance walking. O, as Heaven had broke,
And dropped her little stars, you golden spoke!

If memory rises upon these peaks, other forces gather to set the soul upon the slopes where it passes a judgment upon its moods. Here in this sonnet is a deep utterance that grows to a magnificent vision in the climax:

Sordid my life, they say, and they say true,
If the world's favor be life's only sun.
Here in the firelight where I bake and brew,
None save immortals look me smiling on.
Ah, only Heaven's vagrants! If I durst

Take mine own chair an angel must get up,
And, would I drink, ere I may ease my thirst
Celestial lips make bright my cabin cup.
But no silk robes trail hither for my sake,
And for my dear, he is a lord so poor
His dreams are bare of gold. He can but take
A thread from Fate, and, leaving not his door,
If he there will, beneath a threshold vine,
Spin white eternity in one brief line.

I quote this sonnet for another reason that will be apparent to the reader of this sequence. A memorial poem, with its definite tribute to one with whom life made a close union, in which spirit and circumstance colored and reflected aspects of the world, and the deeper sensibilities of character, these sonnets also by their sheer intellectual penetration build up around their central motive a fabric of spiritual abstractions, of significant ideas. Destinies and fates, the "casual fortunes" of human experience, all those parts of obscure influence which alter imperceptibly the traditions and circumstances of life, are brought into illusory relations with the purposes of this memorial chant. The conception of each individual sonnet is on an exalted plane of feeling; the singer is not satisfied merely to bring loss and grief into expression as a too narrowly personal offering, but must needs give it the sanctity of nature's bewildered attitude of supplication before the Unknown. This twelfth sonnet illustrates the scale on which the poet's mind soars:

Ah well, we know the universe we know
A sandgrain is unto the one that has
No boundary in thought, and all the show
That science makes is as a juggler's pass
Outside the circus door of wonders. Spheres
Fly animate with aim, while man doth make
His genial plaudits that awake no ears
Beyond his own; at his breath's end they break.
Truth is the planet's eye, but yet is faith
Her mighty telescope, uncovering all
The formless outworlds, till the Whisperer saith
"There lie my bower-lands; let go this ball."
Yet in one heart we wall His globed demesne,
Nor need of windows when we've all within.

One needs no further proof than these quotations that here is an authentic achievement. No mood could ring truer than this mood of deep-felt grief. Its expression could not be more genuinely wrought with the fine subtlety of speech and image. In everything these sonnets are of the twentieth century; they are the products of a modern temperament, and yet possessing every old distinction of poetic truths. The wistfulness of clinging to lost possessions, is a wistfulness that has turned in these sonnets from uncertainty to strength, to an element that has turned from a lure to a force, bright, dignified, and graceful. If the memorial is one of amazing distinction, the art in which it is clothed is of that beauty which comes nigh to perfection.

San Francisco Chronicle June 25th 1922

Poems From the Mountain Side



Olive Tilford Dargan

Olive Tilford Dargan Invites Her Soul to Carolina Farm

OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN lives on a mountain-side farm in North Carolina, where there is time for reflection and wonder, and the quiet stalking of shy beauty. Her new book of poems, "Lute and Furrow," is well named, for her lyrics have both song and the soil in them. Any reader must indeed

"Confess to the speedwell and robins
That they have a new comrade."

The mountains, too, have their part in these poems, and the friendly loneliness of those who invite their thoughts as guests. On the other hand, the clear and quiet mood is often broken with a sudden impatience that is modern in tone because it has scant courtesy for the notion that a poet must appear in stole and surplice instead of ordinary human clothes.

On one occasion she breaks off with an engaging abruptness:

"You may drain any river
And find three garnets.
There's a garnet in this poem
If you go after it with a dredge."

But for the most part no dredge is needed to uncover the garnets of a spirit that rejoices in the hills and the grass and the cotton stalks and the lives of the people about her whose feet are held to the furrow and is near enough to the sky to have hope of the world, the hope expressed in "We Creators:"

"Let us go on with experiments;
Let us dare and dream and do;
Some day we may make a world
With a buttercup in it,
Or a swallow's wing."

(New York: Charles Scribner's

Kentucky Women Poets

Olive Tilford Dargan

By ANNA BLANCHE McGILL.

A few years ago the Southern Society of New York awarded $500 to the year's most notable work by a Southerner. A Kentucky poet, Olive Tilford Dargan, received the prize for her sonnet sequence, "The Cycle's Rim." Later the University of North Carolina conferred its highest degree upon Mrs. Dargan for her prominence in the Southern literary group. Her artistic interpretation of Southern Appalachian scenes and people in her "Highland Annals" inspired the university's gesture of appreciation.

A native of Grayson County, Kentucky, Olive Tilford Dargan began her education in her native State. She spent a few years in the West, but in her eighteenth year she returned to Kentucky with her invalid father. Both her parents were teachers. This doubtless explains her own scholarly mind and ambitions.

A college education was the objective of this Grayson County Kentuckian from her early girlhood. A Peabody College scholarship opened the way to the University of Nashville, Tennessee. Following her graduation she taught for a while in Southern schools and later in Canada. Her zest for education led her to Radcliffe College, where she specialized in English and philosophy. There she made the acquaintance of another young scholar, a South Carolinian, Pegram Dargan, whom she married. Another "marriage of true mind!"

Mrs. Dargan's first volumes were poetic dramas, "Lords and Lovers," "Semiramis," "The Mortal Gods." Their richly flavored phrases and vigorous imagination recalled the large utterance of the Elizabethans.

Intellectual, classical, idealistic, these poetic dramas are today caviare to the general—as many other of the type, those of Browning, Stephen Phillips, William Vaughn Moody and similar "literary" playwrights. (Our taste is rather for "Street Scenes," "Grand Hotels," though we do relish "The Green Pastures," "Berkeley Square," "Alison's House.") If, however, Mrs. Dargan's plays are for the library, rather than for the theater, their situations and characters are often intensely dramatic. The lines frequently rise to passion and to beauty.

"The Cycle's Rim," which drew the Southern Society's award, is an elegy for the poet's husband, who was drowned at sea. It has been pronounced the nearest approach ever made by an American poet to the sustained beauty and imagery of the great Elizabethan sonnet sequences. English as well as American critics acclaimed its rich thought, imagination, fresh diction. George Woodberry, poet and critic, was captivated by the book's "gentle loveliness, wonderful elan. . . . It rallies the spirit." The "antique artist-like stroke of expression," continued Woodberry, "wakes me up like a thunderclap in the morning."

These days when we long for a blast of "spring thunder," how enchanting these seasonable lines:

When God has dropped His garlands to the earth,
And birds in twittering showers cry, "Spring, O Spring!"
What heart among us then knows not rebirth,
Nor would, if harp were his, go forth and sing?

The love of beauty which sings in this melodious stave pervades Mrs. Dargan's work. Never is it cold, detached beauty; on the contrary, it is always wrapped up with the human, with memories and loves. "Old Farrington," for instance, where "each mute old house is more old than the other"—and ivied over with associations. "Oh, what a lover must thou be, old Time," cries the poet, "with so much beauty to thy bosom folded."

"The Cycle's Rim" strikes fathom-deep in emotion. What lover would not rejoice to sign this tender, fresh-phrased apostrophe:

Why do I love thee? Thee, my other wing?
Sweet of the wild? My tree of cinnamon
Not for thine eyes where twilights wandering
Lead beyond the world, past any sun
Whose arrows query after. Not for pearls
Within thy voice that bring with them the sea
They could not leave; nor thy low voice that curls
Soft captor rings round fireside mystery;
Nor faun in thee that seeks a forest goal
Hid in my heart; nor hermit's shade and tent
Thou makest of thy arms for my bare soul
When, stripped of vision, there I creep forespent.
Nay, I know not. Thus is my love defended
'Gainst ambushed Time. Know, and love's day is ended.

Old-fashioned, of course, by standards of the hour—yet with more genuine poetry and emotion, more happy tropes, than may be found in half a dozen poems by some smart young versifier of the moment.

"Path Flower," the title poem of one of Mrs. Dargan's best-known collections of verse, finds place in anthologies almost as frequently as Francis Thompson's "Daisy." And for the same reason—because of its simple haunting music and its human note. It recounts an older person's awakening to new wisdom through a chance encounter with a little girl who had gone forth "to find the spring." The first stanza is one of the most magical in Twentieth Century verse. If you doubt, try substituting other words for these:

A red cap sang o'er Bishop's Wood,
A lark o'er Golder's Lane,
As I the April pathway ~~took~~ trod
Bound west for Willesden.

Typical of the poet's delicate perceptions and fresh statement is this little April sketch:

At foot each tiny blade grew big
And taller stood to hear,
And every leaf on every twig
Was like a little ear.

The ballad measure of this poem is

931.

SONNETEER



OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN.

good illustration of the poet's mastery of different forms. Her hand turns flexibly from sonnet, blank verse and other older mediums to freer, more modern rhythms.

The volume, "Lute and Furrow," sings upon the heights, but descends also to homely earth and the ways of men. Upward beat the sparks of idealism in these characteristic, much-quoted lines:

Pale is the dream we dream alone,
An unresolving fire,
Till beacon hearts make it their own
And men are lit with man's desire.

Life is the search of God
For His own unity;
I walk stone bare till all are shod,
No gold may sandal me.

In some quarters it has been the custom to contrast the sensuous note of Southern poetry with the sterner ethical and heroic note of the New Englanders.

Mrs. Dargan's "Highland Annals" holds high rank in our literature of the Southern Appalachians. This volume contains the stories gathered near the author's North Carolina farm, on the top of the Unakas—"my hundred hills, tipped with bloom from Three Pine Point to Sunrise Spar * * * acres of trillium and anemone."

When the Atlantic Monthly first gave these "Highland Annals" to the public the Eastern critics prophesied that they would "place Mrs. Dargan, already distinguished as a poet, among the foremost writers of American fiction. It is a book of beauty and discernment." Mrs. Dargan's successful capture of the personality and diction of her mountain neighbors recalls Synge's Aran peasants and Synge's ideal of a speech "as fully flavored as a nut or an apple." Mrs.

The Book of the Day

Mrs. Dargan in Lyric Mood.

PATH FLOWER AND OTHER POEMS. By Olive Tilford Dargan. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York City. Net, $1.25.

South Carolina may claim some share in the fame of Olive Tilford Dargan, for though her birthplace was in another State and her present residence is in Boston, she is the wife of the South Carolinian, Pegram Dargan of Darlington. Her latest volume of verse has but confirmed and deepened the impression made by its predecessors, "The Mortal Gods and Other Dramas," "Lords and Lovers and Other Dramas" and "Semiramis."

So admirable a critic as James Huneker says, in the North American Review: "Her vocabulary is varied, glowing, expressive. Indubitably a poet of great charm and power has appeared. . . ." Edward H. Clement of the Boston Transcript says: "The poems are exquisite as pieces of art and they are rich with heart's blood, warm with sympathy, fiery with purpose all through." Jessie B. Rittenhouse, in a long review published in the New York Times, points out the special significance of the present work: "A volume of lyric poetry by Olive Dargan is an event long anticipated by her admirers, for it was certain that a poet capable of the fine, free, vigorous lines and the richly textured beauty of Mrs. Dargan's dramas must have lyric gifts of no common order. . . . One can not fail to note the delicate psychology, the pure and unaffected diction, the feeling for beauty which marks them all, and one may say without reserve that no current work in verse bears more unmistakably the poet's credentials.

State Colum bia S. C.



OLIVE T. DARGAN.

Distinguished poet represented in "North Carolina Poetry," a just-published volume reviewed on this page.



OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN, AUTHOR OF — "LUTE AND FURROW"

Poet Sings of Many Themes

"Lute and Furrow" Abounds With Fine Imagination.

"Lute and Furrow," by Olive Tilford Dargan; Charles Scribner's Sons.

A poet-farmer, whose acres are on the mountains of North Carolina, is Olive Tilford Dargan. Mrs. Dargan was born in Kentucky, but her opportunities for travel and residence in the big cities and pleasant town of America and England have been numerous. She has written several volumes of dramas and poems and prose. She received a $500 prize awarded by the Southern Society of New York for the best work published by a Southern writer in 1916. "The Cycle's Rim," which won her prize, is a volume of lyric poems.

"Lute and Furrow" is a collection of poems of many subjects—of life and experiences at home and abroad, of people and places, of emotions, of comedies and tragedies. Mrs. Dargan here gives further proof of imagination, of a high creative faculty, of warmth in expression and wide sweep of vision. She sings of the south of England—of the sea and of romance, of love and youth and the things thereof.

Mrs. Dargan sings of the "joy and the flushing pulse that in beauty's beginning exults." And further:

What is this sudden gaiety that shakes
the grayest boughs?
A voice is calling fieldward, 'tis time to
start the plows!
To set the furrows rolling while all the
old crows nod,
And deep as life, the kernel, to cut the
golden sod!
The pen, let nations have it—we'll plow
awhile for God.
When half the things that must be done
are greater than our art,
And half the things that must be done are
smaller than our heart,
And poorest gifts are dear to burn on
altars unrevealed,
Like music comes the summons, the challenge from the world—
"They tread the immortal measure who
make a mellow field!"

There is also evidence of the fine endowment of the singer in many of the other poems. Mrs. Dargan's appreciation of beauty is manifested in "Lute and Furrow" as in her various other creations. There may be dissent by many from the laudatory lines to John Reed, the radical, whose tumultuous life came to a close in Russia in days of turmoil. But as a rule Mrs. Dargan's philosophy and code run true.

EVENING WORLD

ess: New York City.

JUN 24 1922

TURNING THE PAGES

—By—

E. W. Osborn

Copyright, 1922 (New York Evening World), by Press Publishing Co.

THE moss on your apple trees
Will kill the struggling fruit,
Writes my friend; and sends
me a scaling knife.
But I think that when I am a spirit,
Who has forgotten how to eat,
And come back to my trees,
The struggling green moss
Will be lovelier than the fruit;
And I lay the knife away,
Safely, where it will never hack and
wound
The creeping feet of Beauty.

A thought by Olive Tilford Dargan, whose latest book of verse, "Lute and Furrow" (Scribners), confirms her in high place among American poets.

* * *

Established 1881
FROM
NORTH AMERICAN
Philadelphia, Pa.

POETRY OF DIGNIFIED TRADITION BY OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN ET ALS.

Reviewed by Charles Wharton Stork

"Lute and Furrow," by Olive Tilford Dargan. Scribners. $1.75.

One is safe in expecting something fine of Mrs. Dargan. Her moods have always depth, seriousness and an elusive tinge of mysticism. Her first-hand descriptions of nature attract us at once and her subtl sympathy induces a more meditative second reading.

The volume now before us is characteristic, yet with a difference. Mrs. Dargan, with a competent mastery in the domain of regular meter, has here ventured with a majority of her poems into the borderland of free verse. The reason for this appears in her themes, which run much closer to crude, immediate experience than heretofore. "Lute and Furrow" will therefore prove to some of her admirers a less pleasing book than her earlier collections. Fundamentally, however, it contains the same dawn-fresh observation, the same imaginative intensity as before, tho the form does often lack a certain precision that is the more to be prized in these days because it is growing so rare. When so much good poetry is being written, why cannot we have more that is definitive in expression?

Lyrics with the sustained felicity of Mrs. Dargan's best work of the past are but sparsely scattered thru the pages of her new book. Notable, therefore, are "Ballad of a Wooing," "On Clingman Dome," "Twilight Under Black Cap," and especially "To a Texas Primrose" with its delicate opening stanzas:

A flake of cloud was trembling cast
Where April walked in dew;
Earth loved the alien, made it fast;
It blushed, and then was you.

So light it seems you'd upward go;
Then tender turn and cling.
And like a maid at nod and no
Grow sweeter wavering.

Of such grace, thought intertwined with melody, we can never have enough.

But there is a significant new power in some of the realistic pieces, which, as might be supposed, deal with complex human life rather than with the poet's interpretations of nature. In these hardly less than in the more formal themes and meters Mrs. Dargan shows the value of a school which believes in penetrative thinking, not in dallying with surfaces. Very effective is the story in "Sal's Gap," tho some of the rhymes rival the worst of Browning. Such treatments often go better in free verse, as in "Released," with its striking image:

How long should he drag our bodies over the earth?
Scrubbing them, dressing them, taking them along
With the mind pinned in them like Ariel in the tree?

This could hardly be sung as poignantly to the anodyne measures of a steady rhythm. The most affecting poem in the volume, "Francesca," is a compromise between new and old. Take the lines where the mother watches the daughter asleep:

I gaze long at the face
Thinking at last I shall know her;
For awake she is always hiding
In ripples and pools of change.
Waves of April flow round her,
And she is my willow witch
Weaving her web of winds
Above the blue water.

...nderfully flexible, tho some ...efer the crystaline finality ... and Mrs. Dargan's earlier ...

Clipping from
ST. LOUIS, MO.—GLOBE DEMOCRAT
JUL 1 1922

"Lute and Furrow," by Olive Tilford Dargan.

MRS. DARGAN lives on a farm in North Carolina and the spirit of the fields and the richness thereof have inspired the verses that charm with their beauty and touch the heart with their hint of the deep down sympathy with the human race, whether for Deborah singing that there will be no more children for the soldier who had seen the "dark thing," or sorrow for the elusive Francesca. "Lute and Furrow" has beautiful patterns woven into it, the still winter, spring slipping in on sandals of moss, the voice calling that it is time to set the plow, the deep-toned marching music of the plow in the furrows.

"We'll set the furrows rolling, and drop
the yellow corn;
We'll plow along the universe that
babies may be born.
Ay, no more time for fooling, here's
task without a bound;
It's not the same old earth now that's
spinning us around;
It's Jupiter and Neptune when the plow
is in the ground.

How light, how light the heart grows
with something surely done;
When all the plows are going and all
the tasks are one.
Then Fame's a lass that smirks too
late; the sun's a brother lout;
The moon's a lantern in our hand; the
stars are fieldmen stout;
Oh, luck to die in plowing time; 'twill
just be one step out."

(Charles Scribner's.)

REAL POETIC IMAGINATION IS DISCLOSED BY MRS. DARGAN, ZONA GALE AND A CONVICT IN THREE VOLUMES OF BRILLIANT VERSE

Revived by PHOEBE HOFFMAN

"Lute and Furrow." By Olive Tilford Dargan. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
"A Tale of a Walled Town." By B. 8266. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.
"The Secret Way." By Zona Gale. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Three books of verse of wider contrast in the lives of their writers and their respective viewpoints could hardly have been selected from American literature. Mrs. Dargan has been down in the valley, suffered and, now understanding the hearts of men, stands half way up the mountainside contemplating from where

The road flows down with a bend and a whirl,
(They take it who to market go)
Flows, ripples, flies and falls as though
The mountain wore a curl.

As a mountain lover I could not resist quoting this verse in full, though later I am going to return to a more detailed appreciation of Mrs. Dargan's work.

B. 8266 has been forced to look outward. The epitome of his volume can be gathered from the quotation on the cover:

They know but little of desire
Who know no wall;
But we who sit by no hearth-fire
Do know it all.

The fierce desire to see and know
Home faces and the home-fire's glow,
All that we let so lightly go
And would recall.

Zona Gale seeks relief from the surroundings of "Miss Lulu Bett" by traveling the fantastic ways of the inner consciousness.

But let's return to the woman of the hills, Mrs. Dargan. One verse already quoted shows her passionate close observation of nature. Few writers can equal the antithesis of "Oh, delicate barbarian," as she describes the Texas primrose. Or:

The sun was red on Great Boar's tusk
And all the children at his feet
Were bonneted in dusk.

The real poetic imagination that sees "the harebell's shaken blue" or "I see that the mountain is breathing today; a white mist rolls upon it."

I wish there were more space for further nature quotations, but the human side of Mrs. Dargan's work is too important to pass by. "In Evie's Mother," "Salls' Gap" and "Released" she finds a medium of expression for the inarticulate people of the Southern mountains, as Robert Frost has done for the New Englander.

In the poignancy of suffering and beauty of metaphor in "Francesca" Mrs. Dargan is at her best. Here she employs most effectively the free verse meter that is distinctively her own. Of the dead child she writes:

Her brow that was mere frail porcelain
Holding a child's few treasures
Is a pale, prophetic expanse
Over dreams that bide their vast venture.

We must also mention the poem "Defiance," though space permits no further quotation. Mrs. Dargan's chief fault is sometimes vagueness and obscurity, which even a careful re-reading fails to unravel.

The prison walls have furnished us with another Oscar Wilde, mayhap budding into another O. Henry. B. 8266 is working on a novel. In "A Tale of a Walled Town" he shows a strong gift of dramatic narrative as well as poetic craftsmanship. One immediately compares it to Oscar Wilde, but though the theme is somewhat similar the treatment is widely different. The story is of a poor boy who never had a chance; when he had grown up he wandered over the earth and was making good when he met a woman above him in social position who ruined him with her demands for luxury. After a seven years' jail term he was released to find her the mistress of another man, whom he promptly killed and received a life sentence for his crime.

I know not how they justify
Toll slowly!
Their work who make a man to die,
And yet to live and see no sky.

To hear each hour a passing bell,
And know it rings a funeral knell
Is heard in utmost bounds of hell.

B. 8266 brings home the absolute unindividuality of prison life. His poems bear the rough master strokes of one of Rodin's statues. His rhythms ring of the blows of a hammer, the shuffling of many feet. Again he escapes into the past of old love, well-remembered scenes. Though "the jaunty step must slow." His meters rush and flow. Whatever the man's private life may have been he has put clean vigor and great vitality into his poems.

The music of Miss Gale's verse is Keats-like in its quality. She gives me something of the same feeling which he always inspires of being in a twilight valley buried deep in foliage while innumerable harmonious little threads of water dripped down from the rocks. Her love of beauty is more restrained, less sensuous. She attempts all sorts of verse forms and does daring things with the sonnet. "The Secret Way" is a powerful poem with a mystic strain.

Then softly she: I may not tell
What other eyes behold in mine,
But I have melted night and day
In some wild wine!

I may not read the graven cup,
Exhaustless as a brimming well,
Distilling silver, but I drank
And all is well.

Admirable is her gift of catching a fleeting fancy. How attractive is this opening:

I saw Fair Yellow in the West,
Fair Yellow in the air
The sand, the corn, a bird's breast,
A woman's hair.

Of spring she writes:

Was it on some down where long winds flow
That the wild spirit of spring went out to fill
The eyes of summer? Did a daffodil
Lift a pale urn remote where she lies low?

Her narrative poems are more sentimental and lack the power which Mrs. Dargan puts into work of the same character.

Bubbie Dodger
Date. Jan 29 c22

News and Observer — Raleigh

Mrs. Dargan's Latest Book

These Songs From the Carolina Hills Will Interest and Delight Every Tar Heel.

LUTE AND FURROW, By Olive Tilford Dargan. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922 Pp. 140. $1.75)

By no means the greatest interest to be attached to this volume is the fact that it is the work of a North Carolina poet; but, in a state where volumes of poetry issued by national publishers are as rare as hen's teeth, "Lute and Furrow" must emphatically offers cause for gratulation. That the volume is attracting favorable attention and that much of its inspiration is drawn from the mountains of the state are but further reasons why the book should be brought to the attention of every North Carolinian.

Born in Kentucky of Virginia ancestry, Mrs. Dargan has for recent years made her home at Almond, Swain county, North Carolina. But she brings to her mountain home a broad familiarity with life gained through extended residence in various parts of America, including New York city, and Europe. From her home at "Round Top" she has written some half dozen volumes of plays and poems, winning, in 1916, the $500 prize offered by the Southern Society of New York for the best book by a Southern writer published during the year. This was her volume of sonnets, "The Cycle's Rim." Books of plays from Mrs. Dargan's pen are: "The Mortal Gods," "Lords and Lovers," "Semiramis," and, in collaboration with Frederic Peterson, "The Flutter of the Gold Leaf and Other Plays" reviewed on this page only a few months ago.

In addition to work in many of the better literary magazines, Mrs. Dargan has published three volumes of lyrical verse: "The Cycle's Rim," already referred to; "Pathflower;" and the present "Lute and Furrow." The Atlantic Monthly, a few years ago, carried a series of sketches dealing with North Carolina mountain folk which, the reviewer knows, several people wish might be continued, eventually to take shape in a volume of prose sketches.

The volume, "Lute and Furrow," takes its title from the initial poem, and is a happy one in that it indicates a transition which is a frequent one at "Round Top" where Mrs. Dargan shares her enthusiasm between her farm and her writing. Indeed if you were to ask Mrs. Dargan, she would probably tell you that she is not a professional writer at all: with her writing is merely a phase of existence very definitely subordinated to the first enthusiasm of living a useful life in her community. The idea is pleasingly expressed in a stanza in the title poem:

"What is this sudden gaity that
shakes the greyest boughs?
A voice is calling fieldward, 'tis
time to start the ploughs!
To set the furrows rolling while all
the old crows nod,
And deep as life, the kernel, to cut
the golden sod!
The pen, let nations have it, — we'll
plough awhile for God."

But now that I have started quoting, I must hasten over to that delightful bit of hopeful cynicism which the poet has called "We Creators":

"Let us go on with experiments;
Let us dare and dream and do;
Some day we may make a world
With a buttercup in it,
Or a swallow's wing."

"Lute and Furrow" shows that Mrs. Dargan has caught the glint of the swallow's wing and the gold of the buttercup. Lyrical throughout, drawing their inspiration from the nature of the mountains, the poems boast of much more than a mere "prettiness." There is an understanding of life, of tragedy, of happiness, which is likely to leave the reader with something far more valuable than a picture. "Hall's Gap", for example, draws for one a local setting vivid in all its details, but at the same time it leaves one with a conception of the beauty in homely things, of the ineffable in life. "Evvie's Mother" recounts the story of a mountain marriage — a girl of fifteen who, with her husband, has just set off with "their thimbleful o' stuff" for their shack "more'n a mile from anybody:"

"She says she'll be satisfied, 'cause
it's Judd.
But she don't like that lonesome creek
Down there in the fork o' the mountains.
It's enough to make an owl hoot in
daylight,
That place is;
An' Evvie'll be by herself a lot."

But the volume offers more than a mere understanding of the bitterness that eats itself out in some mountain homes; to contrast with this it is well to turn to

On Clingman Dome.

The balsam buds are bluer
From leaning on the sky;
With faces nearer, truer,
The stars pass cousinly.

And here on moss like heather,
As fragrant and as deep,
Safe in the tender weather,
The baby angels sleep.

They curl and tumble near me,
Like little laughing flames;
They nudge and do not fear me,
And whisper me their names.

When with the dawn I waken,
I hear them scurrying,
And stare just half mistaken
Where leaves shine like a wing.

God's truants, but forgiven;
For all day long I see
A silver door in heaven
Lean open coaxingly.

Just one more quotation to indicate the wealth of poetry which Mrs. Dargan has found about her in her mountains and to give a suggestion of the poetic imagery which is the warp and woof of her imagination:

Twilight.

The mountains lie in curves so tender
I want to lay my arms about them
As God does.

But this is not a book of mountain poems, not a provincial praising of the glory of the Blue Ridge or "The Land of the Sky." Mrs. Dargan's concern is with beauty and with the radiant wonder of life and with the pettinesses that some people live and with the stranger economies which govern our daily relation. If she sings of a locality in some of her poems, it is merely because for her "Round Top" is a microcosm holding all of the ironies and tragedies, happinesses and glories, of a world or a universe.

Since there is room here for but one selection from this larger phase of the book, it must be reviewer's privilege to quote what is, to him, the finest thing in the volume, — "Compact." Here Mrs. Dargan shows an exquisite command of the lyrical element in elegy in a poem which is reminiscent of nothing so much as some of the finer things in "A Shropshire Lad:"

Compact.

The poplar trembles on the hill
Where once you stood and said
"When I am down for good or ill,
Make here my mountain bed.

"When from my green to your white door
These leaves their signal pass,
I'll quiet lie and listen for
Your foot upon the grass."

But now the sea has made your grave,
Far from your hill that grieves;
And I look down in every wave
To beckoning poplar leaves.

The general impression left from a reading of "Lute and Furrow" is that of a writer tensely interested in humanity, willing to indicate blindnesses in our struggle towards light and paradoxes in our own treatment of ourselves. Nothing is done in a carping spirit; the poet looks down from no boasted heights of her own to set aright the ways of man. Rather does she show us these inconsistencies, these ironies of fate, and leave us hopeful through them all, desirous to "plow a while for God" when plowing is the thing at hand to be done.

C. A. Hibbard.

Citizen July 1922

Lute and Furrow
Mrs. Dargan's New Volume of Poetry

Is An Addition to Local Color Literature of North Carolina.

Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan contributes her fifth volume to the body of American poetic literature. Styled "Lute and Furrow," her most recent work, just from the press, is an addition likewise to the local color literature of the Western North Carolina mountains. The writer having traveled in Europe, her book holds some poems inspired by scenes and experiences abroad. On its formal side, the contents range from more or less strictly patterned verse to what one technician has been recently pleased to liken to rhythmically self conscious spaced prose,—verse libre. Again the content is thoroughly modern, for it meets at least one of the current axioms of modernity,—that it shall convey to the reader new emotions.

As is not infrequently the case, "Lute and Furrow" the titular conception is rather brief. It is an apt prelude, however, for it contains much that is common to the remainder of the book. Likewise it holds one element that is surprising to say the least, an introduction of the mountain language, or idiom, which, though it may make for realism to use in its unidealized form the contrast to the phrases lying next to it, at times is rather jarring. Take for instance in the first poem:

"Reproach is dark upon me; I
almost grasp the pen;
"When comes a laugh like day-
break, and 'Winter's broke,'
says Len.

"His eye is like a highpriest's as
glowingly he 'lows
"He saw a bat by daylight fly
roun' the pigeonhouse.
"Ain't no time now for foolin', we
got to start the ploughs."

"Reproach is dark upon me" and "Ain't no time now for foolin'," as the old lady from the country is quoted as saying, "is some mixtry." One reads it and wonders: is it an experiment? Is it permanent? Would it be better to idealize the form of the speech? Would it be better deleted, or should the whole poem be written on a less elevated plane, to meet the exigencies of language of the hills? For the poem is, as a whole written in lofty vein. To cite:

"I will take up my pen once more
"Meet that stranger my soul, nor
be dumb
"As when earth was the whirl-
wind's floor,
"And Life at her loom sat numb,"

Or again:
"Springs, many as ever have been
"On sandals of moss shall slip in,"

And having quoted these, one should not forget in that same poem:

"Like music comes the summons,
the challenge from the weald,
"'They tread immortal measure
that make a mellow field.'"

So here, as in some other places, Mrs. Dargan alloys real poetic beauty, of which there is much, with the commonplace in speech, though this is not frequently done, and in discussing it one calls to mind the statement of some magnanimous critic of Burns who says that, throwing out all the poems in which he switched words, adding or clipping syllables, or the like instead of choosing another word which would have conveyed the thought, and at the same time would have been workman-like possibly half a dozen or so of all his poems would be left. And one also thinks of the way in which no gem of Burns' is overlooked by those capable of appreciating the artist, and then feels that there is no quarrel with Mrs. Dargan, if she puts it over.

"Lute and Furrow" contains poems of fancy as well as more pure lyrics, and some narrative verse.

"And here on moss like heather,
"As fragrant and as deep,
"Safe in the tender weather
"The baby angels sleep;
"They curl and tumble near me,
"Like little laughing flames—"

Think of this for fancy. It is a snatch of verses cut of "On Clingman Dome."

"The Fourth Watch" is a brief and happy lyric that looks out upon eternity. "Sall's Gap" is a local story, evidently in rhymed stanzas, and is done with a punch. One picks it out with "Evie's Mother," feeling that this is a genuine gift for narrative, narrative achieved with a poetic insight, to be reread and enjoyed.

Again for fancy, here is a whole poem:

"The mountains lie in curves so
tender
"I want to lay my arm about them
"As God does."

It looks like a Japanese poem on the page, (what they call a hokku, is it?) But the Japanese poem allows but seventeen syllables to the entire poem, as we recall. This has four more.

Without going into the foreign poems which are interesting, one turns to the last one, "The Sea Asks" and finds something really modern. The great "bridge of ships" America built during the war lies rusting in harbors, while "Hunger kills the East and plenty kills in the West." It is a modern theme, modernly treated, and very affective.

"Francesca" (1904-1911) opening "Sweet of the Dawn Is She" is a beautiful poem. Evidently an elegy, it begins with a dainty verse movement, rhymed, running into free verse, and of its kind stands unique, an art work.

Whatever impressions one may have from "Lute and Furrow," two must remain outstanding. One is Mrs. Dargan's ability to seize upon that which is beautiful, the other a command of musical language.

—H. A.

Courier Journal
Louisville, Ky
JUN 22 1924



OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN.

BOSTON EVENING TRANSCRIPT, SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1922

s of the Day === Lute and Fu

A Mountain Farm a Poet's Parnassus

In Olive Tilford Dargan's Latest Book of Verse She Calls Forth the Spirit of Beauty in Woods and Streams

By William Stanley Braithwaite

THE usual information given on the jacket of a book about its contents is generally nothing more than a literary joke. The purpose of the "blurb" is to advertise what the reader is supposed to want, and not what the publisher often knows to be the truth. The claim made for the contents of Mrs. Dargan's book, by her publisher, is so admirably to the truthful point that I must quote it. I venture to say it was not done by the publicity man of the House of Scribner, but by some hand that has been familiarly touched with pure literature. "From lute to furrow," says this gem of publishing veracity, "is not an infrequent transition for Mrs. Dargan on the slopes of her mountain farm in North Carolina. Her fields and her study are rival claimants, and both her meditation and activities on her farm have furnished themes for the verse in this volume. The spirit of beauty, whether calling from the classics or from her mountain woods and streams, is equally alive to her sympathy and imagination. Still again she rises to those graver themes that vibrate with the deepest emotion and beat with the pulse of humanity itself."

These words hold the very essence of Mrs. Dargan's book, a book of lyrical song which comes to us so enrapturingly after a too long silence with the poet. Let me quote two stanzas from the opening poem "Lute and Furrow" to let Mrs. Dargan express her own moods in the substances of these pages:

What is this sudden gaiety that shakes the
gayest boughs?
A voice is calling fieldward, 'tis time, to start
the ploughs!
To set the furrows rolling while all the old
crows nod,
And deep as life, the kernel: to cut the golden
sod!
The pen, let nations have it,—we'll plough
awhile for God.

Quite an unadorned verse in reality, but it is only a key, rather a seed, from which sprouts in the succeeding pages visions that take the color of their flames from the meditation of the earth, and the earth giving its symbolism to the web of human experience. There is the other mood of creation, when the heart of the poet is a furrow seeded with dreams sprouting in subtle and poignant rhyme.

The winter has grown so still
I can pause and pluck what I will
From the arms of Time as he goes.
All the poems with beauty half-hid.
Yet touching my haste like a rose,
May fall to me now if I bid.

The spirit of Beauty, yes, it saturates these pages, and it is through beauty's vision that Mrs. Dargan "rises to those graver themes that vibrate with the deepest emotion and beat with the pulse of humanity itself." I like nothing better in this extraordinary book for showing the dark moon-side of this poet's heart-mystery than the poem "Defiance." "Francesca" is a more beautiful poem, glinted with pure rays of tenderness; "To a Texas Primrose" is a Wordsworthian illumination of a natural object; "Sall's Gap" and "Released" are brief narratives flawless in finish and superbly rich in human substance; I named merely a few, but "Defiance" is a personal spirit taking on the flesh of words:

What is the wind-flower's nod to you
Whose Spring brings back no ghost?
What is the harebell's shaken blue,
Rocking again within my heart?
What are the tulip sails high-tost
Where suns depart?

You nothing see when Youth, the seer,
Dies proud against a wall;
Blind yet when eyes of friends long true
Meet in your shadow even there

Fill with a light undoing all
That you can do.

A sage speaks clear as bells that make
A gold lake of the air;
On heart and lips that dared, you set
The heavy earth; but waiting where
A world's two ways their parting take,
Men listen yet.

A poet walks; you haste to cut
The breath of flame and dew,
And doors of vision fumble shut;
But words of his, as bright as tears,
Have lit like birds on all the years
Time holds from you.

Who knows how lone the sea must flow,
Is lonelier than the sea;
A greater than the hills is he
Who feels them pass from sand to sand,
And who knows Death, to Death may go
With almoner's hand.

Or dear or great they fall as grass;
They go, and never come;
But still we seek out ways to pass
Beyond the tether of the breath,
And hope runs on from tomb to tomb
Denying death.

I want to quote right after this piece a verse called "The Poem," because in it Mrs. Dargan, going far afield to the locked symbolism of China, has brought back a secret which adorns "Defiance" with a visionary moral:

Li T'ai Po was making a poem about death,
When death moved through his life like a glacier
And ground away all his pretty words.
And ever after when a friend would come to him saying,
"I will read you my poem about death,"
Li T'ai Po would answer,
"I cannot hear you, friend; the North wind is too loud."

The "north wind" of human misery and injustice is often too loud for this poet to hear the music-poem of brotherhood and love in the world. One cannot read "The Sea asks" without feeling the white heat of passion against the selfishness and iniquity in man which permits one half the world to suffer from poverty and the other



Olive Tilford Dargan

This picture is God-awful!
O.T.D.

So said Prof. G. H. Palmer, and I agree.

half to suffer at the same time from abundance.

Why do the ships rot?
Why have I nothing to do
When hunger kills in the East
And plenty kills in the West?

asks the singing question. Is the question unanswerable? No! Because the sea tells,

It is not long since my ships
Were a throng on my waters.
They were carrying bright youths
To slay and be slain.
I ceased to count them as they sped in the service of Death.
Why now are they still when Life would charter their wings?
Life that cries as a child,
That groans as a mother;
That shields a last spark on a million brows
While the death-frost gathers and the ships delay?

What is all this mystery that makes life so, its damning and provocative paradoxes?

A soul so highly keyed to the inequalities of human experience, Mrs. Dargan is not content to toy with the dangerous element of vision; she retreats from that terrible obligatory ideal of "setting the crooked straight," but the further she retreats the clearer becomes her visualization of the pitiable blindness of humanity. Upon this blindness she casts the radiance of beauty, thinking that it might pierce those beclouded eyes of passion and prejudice, and lead hope up a cleaner and more joyous pathway to the goal of love and brotherhood.

There is a strange but fascinating poem here by Mrs. Dargan, called "Pace Tua," which flashes to its end with these lines:

One day—Narrative, narrative!
Shall I slop into your easy path,
And trickle on?

You may drain any river
And find three garnets.

There's a garnet in this poem.
If you go after it with a dredge.

So there is a garnet of meaning in these poems for which the spirit of the reader must dredge, but his dredge must be an instrument of Beauty. This sonnet, "Astray," is a kind of submission of the pattern by which the spirit must build that instrument wherewith the garnet-jewels are dug from the obscurities of life:

When I have wandered in the dusty way
That farthest leads from beauty's path of cool;
My spirit frayed, in suit of seamy day,
And wit gone bare in cheap adventure's school;
A wretched captive whom the gods enjoin
To store poor nothing with laborious breath;
Bowing my back with burden of a coin
That will not toll me through the gate of death,
Nor buy one dream to aid mortality
To stay the ravage of eternal dearth,
And with one star array my memory
To shine an hour above the faded earth;
I sink as one too weak for wish or cry,
Glad of oblivion's shade before I die.

I cannot leave Mrs. Dargan's book without quoting from "To a Texas Primrose." The perfect simplicity of this poem is matchable with those symbolic emblems of nature which the magic of great poets has touched into immortality. The poet finds this humble flower obscured in its own habitat, and in these lines tells it how Herrick would have praised it into fame: but having Mrs. Dargan's praise no Herrick was needed:

Your robe, though royal from old time
Ere rose and daffodil,
Must, for the want of broidered rhyme,
Kirtle a gypsy still.

So shyly glowing, meekly gay,
And so for music meet,
I wonder what would happen, say,
If I were Herrick, sweet.

Surely he'd smuggle you somehow
Into the Muses' hall;
And proud court flowers there should bow
To a new queen lineal.

With hint and smile he'd fix your sound
Unquestioned dynasty,
Sending the happy whisper round,
Beauty is pedigree.

That last line is the best tribute we can pay Olive Tilford Dargan. In song Beauty is her pedigree, and its image is rising to full view now that the pathway to Parnassus is no longer cluttered with the motley and rabble who thought it possible to make a tack hammer out of a flute.

New York City
Times
DEC 27 1924

POETRY'S GOLDEN AGE

New York Times Review of Books:

THE posthumous letter of Madison J. Cawein, printed in THE NEW YORK TIMES REVIEW OF BOOKS for Dec. 20, is most timely, for it seems to me that his prophecy in regard to "The Golden Age" of poetry, especially American poetry, has now come true. It was evidently written before the beginning of the present revival of interest in poetry and the drama, before such poets as Edwin Arlington Robinson, George Sterling, Olive Tilford Dargan, Louis V. Ledoux, Vachel Lindsay, Louis Untermeyer, James Oppenheim, Lascelles Abercrombie, William H. Davies, John Drinkwater, Eugene Claudel, Emil Verhaeren, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal had achieved the high degree of success that is theirs today. Bliss Carman, Richard Le Gallienne, Percy Mackaye, Cawein himself, Stephen Phillips, Ezra Pound, Alfred Noyes, William Watson, Kipling, and Yeats had already appeared above the horizon and had achieved a fair degree of success. The forerunners of twentieth century verse were well known, and many of them had ceased to sing. These included Whitman, Hovey, Henley, Rosetti, Swinburne, Thompson, and Wilde, whose work really belonged to the present era rather than that of the nineteenth century.

Truly, the above is a formidable array and compares favorably only with the well-known singers of Elizabethan times. It is true that a hundred years or so ago a handful of English poets, among them Scott, Shelley, Keats, and Byron, produced really great poetry, but when they ceased there were none to take their places and the promised renaissance never came. Immediately there followed a period of exceeding barrenness, not alone in poetry but in all the fine arts. America during this period produced but one poet worthy of the name, Edgar Allan Poe. Poets who were popular during this time, Longfellow, Whittier, and Tennyson, among others produced hardly anything of lasting merit; most of their work was destined to survive only in the scrap-books of the over sentimental.

The "Anthology of Magazine Verse," published last week by William Stanley Braithwaite, contains the best of the present year's output of American poetry, for but few poems of merit appeared in books that were not first printed in the magazines. A glance through the pages of this book will convince the most skeptical that in no past year has there been produced poetry to compare favorably in quality or quantity to the output of this year. The depth of poetic feeling in Mrs. Dargan's "Old Fairingdown," the interpretive power in Vachel Lindsay's "The Firemen's Ball," written in his newly created style of "The Congo" and "General William Booth;" the lightness of touch in the exquisite little lyric by Sara Teasdale, "The Look"; the haunting rhythm of E. Sutton's "The Drum," and the originality of the long poem entitled "New York" by Edwin Davies Schoonmaker, which, though crude in passages, strikes a new note in vivid pictorial verse, are all indicative of the excellence of present-day poetry and of the even better things to come.

I strongly feel that there are many who will agree with Mr. Cawein's statement that "there is really as excellent poetry being produced at the present time * * * as was being produced on both sides the Atlantic fifty or a hundred years ago," and who, judging by the creditable verse being published today, will beg to differ with his statement and that of THE NEW YORK TIMES REVIEW OF BOOKS as to the recognition of poetry by publisher and public.

FORREST B. SPAULDING.

New York, Dec. 20, 1914.

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etry Prize Winners For 1924 Listed In December "Fugitive"



OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN

Winner of the Ward-Belmont Prize of $50.)

Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan of North Carolina was born in Grayson county, Kentucky, and was educated at Radcliffe College and at the University of Nashville. She has lived and traveled abroad, but of late years has made her home in the mountain regions of North Carolina. Her first literary successes were in the field of the poetic drama. Her "Semiramis," "Lords and Lovers," "The Siege," and "The Mortal Gods," won her a wide recognition. Of the last act of her play, "Carlotta," John White Chadwick says that it is "the highest point in tragic drama achieved since Shakespeare."

Her first volume of poems, "Pathflower," was published in England in 1914. A sonnet series, "The Cycle's Rim," which the Boston Transcript calls "the nearest approach ever made by an American poet to the sustained imagery and beauty of the Elizabethton sonnet sequences," appeared in 1916, and won the $500 prize offered by the Southern Society of New York for the best book by a Southern writer published during the year. Her most recent volume of poems, "Lute and Furrow," has added to her fame as a distinguished Southern writer, and has won her an increasing audience of admirers. She is now writing a series of sketches for the Atlantic Monthly.

She is acknowledged by the leading critics to be among the foremost interpreters of Southern life, particularly of the North Carolina mountain folk whom she knows by long and familiar acquaintance. In announcing the award, the editors of The Fugitive pay tribute to her distinguished accomplishments in this field, and point to her poem "Far Bugles," published in the August Fugitive, as a notable specimen of her work, and as one of the notable poems of the year. A lyric, "In Doubt," appears in the December issue.

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The Other World. Robe
Epitaph. Robert Hillyer.
Scherzo. Robert Hillyer.
Firewood. Raymond Ho
After the Circus. Raym
To Nine Who Vanished
Measure: A Journal
Wild Honey. Raymond
Poetry

POETS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1923
Books of the Day
Tribune



Olive Tilford Dargan

MRS. DARGAN was born in Greyson County, Kentucky, and educated at the University of Nashville and Radcliffe College. She has taught school in Arkansas, Missouri and Texas. She lived abroad for a number of years, and returning to the States early in the war, she made her home in the mountain regions of North Carolina, though spending her winters in New York city. Her early work was in the poetic drama, which immediately won wide and enthusiastic admiration. Most notable are "Semiramis," "Lords and Lovers," "The Siege" and "The Mortal Gods." Mrs. Dargan's lyrical work in the "Pathflower," and "Lute and Furrow" has given her a preëminent position. In 1916 she published "The Cycle's Rim," a sonnet sequence, which is the nearest accomplishment ever made by an American poet to the sustained imagery and beauty of the Elizabethan sonnet sequences. For this work Mrs. Dargan was awarded the $500 prize offered by the Southern Society of New York for the best book by a Southern writer published during the year.

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AMERICAN POETS

Transcript
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1923
Books of the Day



Olive Tilford Dargan

MRS. DARGAN was born in Greyson County, Kentucky, and educated at the University of Nashville and Radcliffe College. She has taught school in Arkansas, Missouri and Texas. She lived abroad for a number of years, and returning to the States early in the war, she made her home in the mountain regions of North Carolina, though spending her winters in New York city. Her early work was in the poetic drama, which immediately won wide and enthusiastic admiration. Most notable are "Semiramis," "Lords and Lovers," "The Siege" and "The Mortal Gods." Mrs. Dargan's lyrical work in the "Pathflower," and "Lute and Furrow" has given her a preëminent position. In 1916 she published "The Cycle's Rim," a sonnet sequence, which is the nearest accomplishment ever made by an American poet to the sustained imagery and beauty of the Elizabethan sonnet sequences. For this work Mrs. Dargan was awarded the $500 prize offered by the Southern Society of New York for the best book by a Southern writer published during the year.

BOSTON EVENING TRANSCRIPT, SATURDAY

of the Day === Mrs.

Dec. 12, 1914

MRS. DARGAN AS LYRIC POET

A New Note in Her Latest Volume of Verse

By William Stanley Braithwaite

TO become suddenly aware of qualities in lyric verse that are finely tempered with intellectual beauty and which are at the same time full of ecstatic and magical expression, and to find them combined as in the work of Mrs. Dargan, is to realize with appropriate delight the greatness of an art which, coming modestly as it does, places indisputably the singer within the odor of poetic sanctity. Mrs. Dargan is deservedly well-known, a little better known in the highest critical circles than any other American, as a writer of poetic dramas interpenetrated with the touches of genius; but as a lyric poet few know how superbly she has condensed these larger elements of poetic fervor into quintessential song. Had we not known Mrs. Dargan's dramas we would declare a new poet, with very few peers among the English-speaking poets of today; since we cannot declare a new poet, we do declare a new achievement in a different form of verse which secures Mrs. Dargan a place in the company of Thompson and Yeats, of Anna Hempstead Branch and Edwin Arlington Robinson.

Arthur Symons, writing about Yeats, remarked: "It is this continuously poetical quality of mind that seems to me to distinguish Mr. Yeats from many men of talent," and he goes on to say that a man will not be a poet in the full sense unless his work, "however unequal it may be in actual literary skill, presents this undeviating aspect." This continuously poetic quality of mind is what distinguishes these poems of Mrs. Dargan's, and no one who gives them a careful reading can honestly deny the genius of the poet. I might as well here warn the prospective reader that these poems demand careful reading, the same careful reading that one has learned to give to the poems of Donne and Francis Thompson, of Browning in his admittedly lucent moods, indeed to every poet who has a substantial message, and who clothes that message in the dazzling imagery of thought and emotion. In these verses, as in all verses that have a secondary significance, a sort of disembodied consciousness of meaning, there are no concessions to intellectual fatigue or emotional lethargy; these concessions are made by poets of commoner talents, and perform their services no doubt, but for those alert aspirations which soar daringly into unknown realms of imagination and dream on the darting meteor of thought and the burning wings of passion, such poetry as this of Mrs. Dargan's is a medium of transit. To stamp a true poet by declaring in the poetry a "continuously poetic quality of mind," is only a means of beginning to account for a distinction of utterance which has got to be captured echoing through a variety of symbols.

Here we find in Mrs. Dargan's poems moods that are apparently intuitional but which deepen with a purpose as the verse shapes itself, that is wholly problematical of human experience. It is never that she takes an idea or emotion and makes it into that abhorrent poetic thing, a concrete statement; instead she accumulates illusions which subtly take shape and exist in their truthful and ordained aspects. No poems more than these could be fuller of what I shall ambiguously term the meaning of life; but life in its most personal experiences and in its social idealism is not to be comprehended unless one regards it mystically, and contemplates its many-sided aspects with visionary rapture. For Mrs. Dargan is constantly translating these common substances into symbols which gather from miraculous and remote sources their weavings of thought and feeling. She has a passion for confirming the infinities, an ecstasy for asserting the eternal. But she is thoroughly acquainted with the original language of human destiny, human faith, human experience, and the evidence is in a good many of her poems that the unintelligible strife of the world has lain its staining mark upon her dreams, yet it is with a beatifice kind of wisdom that she resolves it all in that dominion of beauty which patterns its images upon an unconfined spirit. She resembles Francis Thompson in this, as in her raptures and ecstasies, and quite as often in those burnished phrases and epithets which reveal as they mystify, leaving one in that state of amazement at her audacity in emotionally and intellectually winging through regions of infinite soul and sense.

Mrs. Dargan is quite alone among our poets in evoking the spirit of intellectual beauty, that "awful, unseen power," which works like a subtle intoxicant in the substance of the poet's vision. Her verse has an indwelling quality full of initial experiences cinctured at the sources of mystery and becomes a channel for the outflowing secrecies of life; and her recipient moods and ideas grow poignantly awed at the revelations which crowd upon her imagination of the multi-colored and complicated web of existence. Under the spell of these imaginings, a spell that has its wizard stirrings in some simplicity of human fate, her language literally blossoms forth upon the stems and branches of her subject with the myriad and lavish prodigality of nature. Like all fine poets she uses language baptismally, making it a living body with that invisible sign of redemption which gives a glory and beauty to every meaning and inherited symbolic representation of feeling.

A poet so visionary as Mrs. Dargan cannot be associated with theme and subject as much as with atmosphere and substance. A conception is necessary, but it is almost always a suggestive allusion, in which the idea or emotion, mood or passion is definite enough, but which grows more significant as her spirit expands and explores the perplexed consciousness of being. She has made some poems in this volume that are marvellous in this quality of spirit; whose wisdom may be a little remote from common understanding, but in which every stanza, every line, is ripe with the articulate and eternal beauty of spiritual ideals. Nothing can be tenderer, with all its Thompsonian perception of innocence and pity, than the figure of girlhood the poet draws in "Path Flower," the poem which opens the book and after which it takes its title. It was a simple happening, meeting upon the road a girl who "came to find the Spring":

Her Home! I saw the human lair,
I heard the hucksters bawl,
I stifled with the thickened air
Of bickering mart and stall.

Without a tuppence for a ride,
Her feet had set her free,
Her rags, that decency defied,
Seemed new with liberty.

But she was frail. Who would might note
The trail of hungering
That for an hour had forgot
In wonder of the Spring.

And there comes into the poem profounder reflections which assert a social conscience in the poet weighing those differences which make up the unintelligible responsibilities of life. Quite unaware the reader catches Mrs. Dargan chronicling a great and sad adventure of personalities in some hidden and obscure corner of life. "Old Fairingdown," with its delicate and impressionistic feeling for English landscape, is a great story of transitional destinies with its quiet pictures of lives and associations upon which the alchemy of time has worked acidly but leaves a mellow and pensive sadness. The poet goes to the "village that sleeps," soft as "a treader on mosses," and reads as out of some old parchment of fate the histories of unfulfilled lives; of

The child with his eyes on the far land,
And time like a young, curled leaf in his heart;

of the young woman "Waiting the peril of Eve," round whom "the morrows

Creep weaving and winding their mist . . .
They hide the soft rings of her hair,
Dear as a child's curling fingers;
They shut out the trembling sun of eyes
That are deep as a bending mother's;
And her bridal body is scarfed with their chill.

"But the ache I have found here I cannot outclimb," cries the poet, and "O Heart, if we had not heard, if we did not know, There is that in the village that never will sleep!"

In the shorter lyrics and in the sonnets such as "The Game," "Dirge," "To a Hermit Thrush," "On Bosworth Field," "Called," "Friends," and "These Latter Days," "His Argument," "The Conqueror," and "To Mirimon," there is an interpenetration of substance and form, beauty of feeling and power of vision, not often so consistently presented in one volume. But this still leaves the three superb achievements of the book. In the "Ballad," "Magdalen to her Poet," and "Little Daughters," Mrs. Dargan has reached the highest heights of pure poetic vision. In "Magdalen to Her Poet," we have one of the half dozen great odes in American poetry; in "Little Daughters," the greatest lyrical rendering of a modern social vision, and in the "Ballad," a sacrament of spiritual devotion offered by woman to man. To analyze these poems here at the end of this review would be rash, for they demand alone a column of space to suggest their meaning and beauty; but in conclusion I shall quote the opening stanza of "Magdalen to Her Poet," which is a conviction in itself to send the reader after this remarkable book of poems:

Take back thy song; or let me hear what thou
Heardst anciently from me,
The woman; now
This wassail drift on boughless shores;
Once lyre-veined leading thee
To singing doors
Out of the coiling dark;
Teaching thee hark
Earth's virgin candours, blossomed wonderings,
And sanctities inaudible till strings
Of lyric gentleness
Wooed Heaven to confess
Her world, and I was near,
The earliest listener,
Who of my bosom then made Arcady,
And drew thy forest feet to Castaly.

But our feeling about Southern verse has grown a little more optimistic after reading the collection now on our desk. There is, to begin with, "Braithwaite's Anthology and Year Book of American Poetry for 1928" (Harold Vinal, $4). One can approach this annual compilation as a cyclopedia of current information about American verse, or one can approach it on the aesthetic plane. As a book of poetry, there is too much in it, and the contents regularly reveal, not so much the catholicity, as the uncertainty of the editor's taste. The total impression of the collection on me is that of a kind of bright accuracy, and almost mechanical mastery of form; and in [illegible], the persistence of a watery Byronism, a weak spiritual rebellion, vague and adolescent. Only a few poets seem to have strong souls or stout convictions. It is pleasant to observe, however, that one of the few striking pieces in the volume is Olive Tilford Dargan's "Interferin," and that "Apocalypse" by Clement Wood is one of the two or three that compel a second reading. For the most part the distinction made in one of the contributions between "a weaver of words" who makes "a loveliness that has no depth," and a poet with the wind roaring through the soul, is the most important distinction: this book is full of weavers of words.

Columbia State

Dec. 15 or 16th - perhaps

Dec. 15 or 16th perhaps 1930



PAG

Noted Poet Lives In Log Cabin Gathering Her Inspiration From Blue Hills Around Her Home

By RACHEL DYAS

SOMETHING in the surroundings which people create for themselves reflects a trace of their personality, that inner color of the soul, and so in the approaching the West Asheville home of Olive Tilford Dargan, the home of that poet and playwright is easily distinguishable although most of the houses on that quiet street are unnumbered.

Although the reputation of Mrs. Dargan in the world of letters has been established for many years, many Asheville people do not know that this distinguished poet, whom Thomas Nelson Page characterized as the foremost of her time, is living quietly in Asheville. Mrs. Dargan cares nothing for "society" and the dazzle of being lionized, and her home is as unpretentious as herself, but unmistakably just the home that the author of "Highland Annals" would choose.

Built of logs with rose vine tapping at windows that look out to blue distant ridges, with quaint mahogany, open fireplaces, and many books iwthin, the house fits Mrs. Dargan as a comfortable, well worn glove. But surroundings are forgotten in the charm of the mistress, when Mrs. Dargan begins to talk.

Introspective

It would be very difficult to discern from the brilliant conversation of Mrs. Dargan ranging over subjects of world wide interest that she is of real importance in the world of letters. Her interest is in the world, and she does not expect the world to be interested in her. She is not one of these subjective moderns, looking into her own soul for the answer to the riddle of the universe.

Mrs. Dargan, for all her modesty, is rated among the first poets of America, and her writings are well and favorably commented upon where ever the critics raise their voices in praise or blame of those who write. She is perhaps best known here by her single book of prose, "Highland Annals," which is said to be the best book about the Southern mountaineers extant. Her reputation was established before writing "Highland Annals", however. The first, "Semiramis and Other Plays," won her favorable comment, which was continued after the publication of "Lords and Lovers and Other Dramas," "The Mortal Gods, and Other Dramas," "Lute and Furrow," and "The Cycle's Rim" which was dedicated to her husband, Pegram Dargan, who was drowned in 1915. "The Cycles Rim" was awarded a $500 prize offered by the Southern Society of New York for the best book by a Southern writer.

Mrs. Dargan was the daughter of teachers, and at thirteen years old was helping her father in his school in Missouri. At fourteen she was a full fledged teacher. Later she attended the Peabody Normal School in Nashville, Tenn., and still later Radcliffe college, at Cambridge, Mass. She was married in 1898 to Pegram Dargan of South Carolina, after having come to the Southern Highlands to regain the health she had lost in overwork in the school room.

Trace of South

Born a Kentuckian Mrs. Dargan retains a trace of the south although she has traveled much in this country and abroad. She is not interested in sectionalism, however. World fellowship and internationalism are her hobbies, and her one sociological passion is the furtherance of world peace. "The United States should recognize Russia. It would open a vast new channel of industrial exchange, relieve the tension between Britain and America and would help to prevent war," Mrs. Dargan said.

"Here is another land in which I am much interested," Mrs. Dargan said, picking up a late copy of the "China Review," from the table at her elbow, as we sat drinking tea before a cheerful open fire in the great rock fireplace. "When it is read it goes to a Chinese friend in Texas, who slipped in with Pershing's imported cooks during the war, and is now the father of seven young Americans. What is happening in China now is more important to the destiny of the world than what is happening in our own country. What marvelous changes in this old world will be wrought if that sleeping giant really wakes! There are many forces warring there," Mrs. Dargan continued.

But even her enthusiasm for old world countries pales before her enthusiasm for western North Carolina. "For more than twenty years I have been trying to convince northern friends that the most satisfactory climate within the borders of the United States is in western North Carolina. They are now beginning to believe me and are coming down here, a few at a time."

Farming is another enthusiasm of Mrs. Dargan's. "I think farming is the most satisfactory of occupations. It is hard work for a woman, but the satisfactions are manifold. I farmed for many years, but my home was destroyed by fire, so I decided to look upon that calamity as a sort of sign, and to take more time for writing."

Of writing, Mrs. Dargan will say little. "It is hard work, and takes something out of us who follow it," she said. Neither does she put much faith in the old belief that each soul finds itself, that talents find an outlet, and that people find their just levels. "I am sure that there are many inarticulate souls who if they could but find tongue might outsing Homer," she said. "A lack of the right environment, a lack of encouragement at the right time, must frustrate many," she said. "But then," Mrs. Dargan continued with a shrug, "I am more interested in humanity than in literature. My interest in literature is probably in my effort to put humanity into it."

"Lute and Furrow."

From local legend to cosmic emotion, garbed sometimes in trim sonnet and sometimes in the most tattered of free verse, Olive Tilford Dargan has led her muse in the third published volume of her lyric work. It is a far cry from the restrained beauty of "Cycle Rim" to the drab story of the young, overburdened mother presented in "Released" and an almost equal distance between "Path Flowers" and the frank Ezra Pound-like phrasing of "Burned Bridges," so that even Mrs. Dargan's staunchest admirers may be pardoned for arching their eyebrows now and again over the present volume, "Lute and Furrow" (Scribner's).

In the first division, which gives the book its name, are most of the poems in conventional verse forms. And all through them one is brought up short by such flashes of beauty as Mrs. Dargan has shown her readers before—

There is time for the laugh we would fling,
For the wiping of dust from our stars,
For a bee on his marketing wing,
For the forester wind's wild wares. . . .

Then the weight tied fast to the heart;
The doubt that deadens the dawn;
And the raining sting and the smart
Of invisible whips laid on.

Or her lines on the death of a little girl who "lifted her eyes like two hours of June":

But she was Beauty; planets swing
And ages toil that one like her
May make dust sing. . . .

There are ventures somewhat in the style of Sandburg or Masters, however, which are hardly so successful. And there are a number of things in the second section reminiscent of the manner of Stephen Crane: as forceful, perhaps, but hardly more satisfactory, poetically.

And then she wins you back again with such a splendid thing as her deeply sensed poem on the squalid industrialism of the English Black Country, taking you back to Mrs. Browning's "Cry of the Children" with the poignancy of her closing lines.

These strong, who for the weak make beauty sure,
How long will they endure
An earth of ashes and a sky of brass?

It is the same alert sympathy that caused her to write "Evvie's Mother" and some of the other local sketches, but how much more effectively voiced!

Half the fifty poems would have to be quoted to give an adequate idea of Mrs. Dargan's range. Her eye and heart and mind are equally alive to bird and flower and tree and brook and shifting cloud, while her spirit infuses strength and courage into each lyric, and frequently a quality of daring not unlike the amazing Emily Dickinson. And the dignity and solemnity which invest man's task of living she understands:

Who knows how lone the sea must flow
Is lonelier than the sea;
A greater than the hills is he
Who feels them pass from sand to sand!
And who knows Death, to Death may go
With almoner's hand.

Despite some material whose inclusion is questionable, and some unevenness, Mrs. Dargan makes a distinct and valuable addition to the rapidly growing volume of notable American verse.

H. D.

A Song of the Sod

Tribune N.Y.

By Clement Wood

LUTE AND FURROW. By Olive Tilford Dargan. New York. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1922.

A CRITICISM often levelled against American poetry in that it is out of touch with life. This may be true of the super-refined ecstasy of the Imagists, and of those poets who withdraw above reality to sound life in haunting melodies free of intellectual content. It is distinctly untrue of Mrs. Dargan. Her daily life on the slopes of her mountain farm in North Carolina calls for frequent passage between the lute and the furrow; and as her hoe may break the sod in spondees and anapests, so does her lute ring with the ever youthful miracles and magics of the dusty mother of us all. The opening stanza of the title poem breathes a thin music as exquisite as the beloved lines from Christabel, or that Keatsian treasure, "And where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest":

The winter has grown so still
I can stand at the foot of the hill
Where the stream beneath the bridge
Is dry as a heart after grief,
And hear at the top of the ridge
The wind as it lifts a leaf.

Out of this astringent winter mood, with leisure "for the wiping of dust from our stars," comes the thrilling call that it is time to start the plows. The poet must leave "the voice blown low from the wood," and turn to the labor that has been man's since Eden gate clanged to. But there are breathing spells, in which she may see and say:

The balsam buds are bluer
From leaning on the sky.

The homely tang of the soil breathes throughout such forceful narrative poems as "Sall's Gap," in formal meter, and the polyrhythmic "Eyvie's Mother." Its song hovers as an overtone to the whole book.

That she has not lost the old magic is evidenced by formal lyrics like "Job 31: 1" and "In an Almshouse Garden," which we quote:

Here gnarled old men as stooped as trees
Youth wounded, not to die,
Quaver the old philosophies,
And drift around the sky.

Or glad, so glad, since work is done,
And no man knows his grave.
They sit a little in the sun
And watch the warm grass wave.

A new note is creeping into her work—a critical note, which refuses to accept the things that are as the ideal Arcadia, and questions if there be not something rotten nearer than Denmark. Take the forthright vigor of "Home":

He came, her hero crowned,
Neat as a lily trim;
She put her arms around
The hell of him.

The horror with no name
He looked on night and day.
Though it met her like a flame,
Her love would slay.

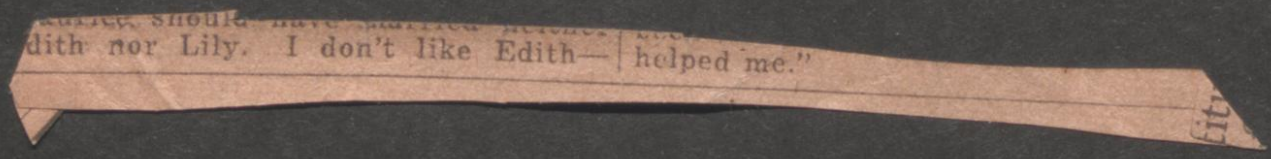
Her soft hands, they should cling;
Her kisses, they should wean
Him from the strange, dark Thing
That he had seen.

And when his days grew mild,
And he said "You let me go;
But I forgive you, child;
You did not know";

She yet knew not her loss.
His soul its shore would keep
And in no world would cross
To hers asleep.

Certain American poets have established their sure places in the constellation of public esteem by their utter originality, coupled with a universality of appeal that makes them speaking tongues to hundreds who miss the lighter, softer whispers. Masters for the cynic brutality of "Spoon River," Sandburg for the heart's thought on common lips, Vachel Lindsay for his thumping folk rhythms, Robert Frost and Edwin Arlington Robinson for dryer, higher visioning, Sara Teasdale for the earliest hunger, Elinor Wylie and Edna St. Vincent Millay for the latest phrasing of it—these earn the established rankings. But the poetry in such singers as Mrs. Dargan is as authentic, although quieter, slighter; and it is an integral part of the important hour when what is best among us has found at last a voice.

Loose Item(s)



Lit. Lantern
Courier Journal
Louisville

* * *

We owe both felicitations and thanks to Olive Tilford Dargan this week. The first we extend in recognition of the fact that the University of North Carolina conferred upon Mrs. Dargan the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters for "her position of prominence in the Southern literary movement and for her artistic and imaginative interpretation of North Carolina life." A native Kentuckian, Mrs. Dargan has been living for several years at her estate in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Our thanks go to the poet for the privilege accorded us of first publishing her sonnet:

IN A MOUNTAIN PASTURE
(By Olive Tilford Dargan.)

Green bowl where heaven drinks and cools the cheek
Of watchfulness. White, wading blossoms trim
The grassy wave, up-rambling to the brim
In swaying leisure. Oak and chestnut streak
The crest-line with their young, that tip-toe meek
And listen upward, reaching limb to limb
Like children in a ring. What pagan hymn,
Is ended, and what god about to speak?

No god. This is a human shrine, too warm
For chill of deity. The roofless air
Is like a crystal where I see a form
Nameless as man; or named, what do I care
If in his world-old eyes all hate hath end?
Buddha, or Jesus, Ghandi, or my friend.

TELFAIR, Jr.

The News
Orient 1925

From EVE. TRANSCRIPT
Address: Boston, Mass.
Date NOV 25 1914

By Edward Clarence Editor Transcript

THE LISTENER

It is gratifying indeed to those of us who chanced to be in a position to observe the beginnings of Mr. William Stanley Braithwaite's study and practice of the poetic art, to learn as the Listener has just learned from an American literary woman, who has lately returned from England, that over there—among literary folk and publishers, at least—Mr. Braithwaite is regarded as the best, if not the sole, authority on American poetry. So much is this the fact, that it is considered in England, so far as the professional verse-making for magazines is concerned, that, not to be in Mr. Braithwaite's Anthology of American poems of the year, is not to be known as a poet. Mr. Braithwaite has been so straightforward, single-minded, and diligent in his devotion to poetic literature, and especially to the current poetic output, and so modest and unaffected withal, and so free from the disagreeable qualities that sometimes come to light with a distinguished success, that it is a pleasure to recognize his authority. Moreover it confirms the judgment and prediction of that venerated leader in our American thought and culture, Professor Charles Eliot Norton. He testified, a score of years ago, that Braithwaite was innately gifted with those indefinable qualities variously known as "style," and "distinction," and that undoubtedly, with proper cultivation and encouragement, he would go far. The Listener pleasantly recalls now this Norton letter of introduction, accompanying a very shy youth's offering of a truly "distinguished" copy of verses.

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Mr. Braithwaite's annual review of the output of American poetry, in the magazines, has slipped into existence as an "institution" without any flourish, simply because it is so well and faithfully done and fills a distinct place of its own, and was needed. It is convenient for poetry readers to have such an expert go over and appraise the growing crops of magazine poetry in this country, for it is as various in quality as it is prolific. Mr. Braithwaite himself, with all his partiality for them, admits that there are "fifty-seven varieties" of magazine poets. This year he selects from all these "common or garden" growths what he classes as "the thirty poems of distinction." His selection may not wholly agree with any other reader's to the full—as it happens, he includes one poem which the Listener has publicly and specifically deplored. But, at all events, it sets up a standard—that of an approved connoisseur of distinction. Tak-

ing as [illegible] the qualities of these thirty poems, one may be able to discover something of what the critics mean by "distinction." Noting the comprehensive variousness of the elect thirty, one can at least acquit Mr. Braithwaite of anything like that "supercilious and academic attitude" frequent among critics, one conspicuous instance of which he courageously mentions by the name of his paper. It is no light responsibility this, of saying what is "distinguished" and what is not; but if we are to have an American "arbiter elegantiarum," no more conscientious, no gentler, or fairer Rhadamanthus could be selected than Mr. Braithwaite.

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To get at the real meaning of "distinction," one good way is to go where "distinction" is and distinction breathes from every page of the new book of collected poems of Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, just published, in this November by Scribners, and in London last month. Mrs. Dargan figures also among Braithwaite's "thirty poems of distinction" in the American magazines of 1914, and again in the selected fifty-two poems, which together with thirty from other magazines and newspapers, not among the first thirty, make up the American "Anthology of [illegible]gazine Verse for 1914," which, as has just been said, constitutes for English readers and publishers practically all the contemporary American poetry there is. "Distinction" is not necessarily confined to the dealing with difficult, or subtle, or delicate, or high subjects; nor is it immanent in the professional poets' pet and peculiar languages—what might almost be called their slang, or cant, the argot of verse composed of words such as "amaranth" and "asphodel." Take, for example, Mrs. Dargan's poem entitled "Path Flower," which gives its name to the whole collection (and which first appeared in the Atlantic Monthly). Now here, in a simple Wordsworthian tale, in Wordsworthian verse, is "distinction" of the highest. The poet encounters a young city girl from the slums who has walked out into the country lured by the call of the spring:

"How many miles?" Her broken shoes
Had told of more than one.
She answered like a dreaming muse,
"I came from Islington."

"So long a tramp?" Two gentle nods,
Then seemed to lift a wing,
And words fell soft as willow buds,
"I came to find the Spring."

In fact, Mrs. Dargan gives an example and definition of "distinction" in her very own "distinguished style" in the "Ballad," spoken in reckless vein by a mistress of whom, it is suspected, the lover begins to tire. She feigns speaking from the grave:

Let not a thought of my cold bed
Bechill thy warm heart beating red,
And thy new ardors dim;
But if, good hap, you rove where I
Beneath the twinkling moss then lie,
Be glad to see me decked so gay,
(Spring's the best handmaid without pay,)
I like things new,
In season too,
And fain must smile to be so trim.

She has asked him to forget—not to strive to keep awake the woe that "winks for sleep"—to forget the kisses dying not till each a thousand more begot, seeing with how small trouble such easy progeny he still may have. But she wishes him to remember some of her brave merits and claims that she may still be worth a song, though lying "deep in tongueless clay"; and now comes a good definition of distinction:

Admit my eye, than yours less keen,
Still knew a bead of Hippocrene
From baser bubbles bright;
My ear could catch, or short or long,
The echo of true-hammered song;
And many a book we journeyed through;
Some turned us home again, 'tis true
(Not all who pen
Are more than men),
And some, like stars, outwore the night.

Say I could break a lance with Fate,
Took half, at least, my troubles straight
(Let women have their boast);
Homed well with chance, and passing where
The gods kept house would take a chair,
Perchance at ease, with naught ado,
With Jove would toss a quip or two;
The nectar stale,
A mug of ale
On goodly earth would serve a toast.

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There is something Elizabethan about the style and virility of characteristic verses of Mrs. Dargan's. In form, there is the atmosphere of another age, and the strong vintage of an elder day, in a poetic vocabulary caught from Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakspeare. But the feeling is fed from the newest and furthest "advanced" of social advance—the strong sixteenth century "body" of her wine is enriched with the twentieth century soul of pity. To clinch the impression of Elizabethan style there is the single epitaphic verse, "On Bosworth Field." Above King Richard III's dust the poet muses and tells him that he would lie there unremembered, totally, by this time, but that there had happened to pass by a certain vagrant actor—

A swaggerer, perdy!
Who cried "A horse, a horse!" and straight
Thou wert abroad again on kingly feet
To tread eternity.

To this powerful form add the quick breath of repressed fires, deeper pangs than the reproaches of wearied or changed love, singing the pathos of which the new humanity makes us aware, the new statesmanship, the scorn and defiance of "things as they are," the fierce, impatient longing for the things that are to be, and you have the precious contents, the vitalizing strength of Mrs. Dargan's poetry. Space forbids adding here the whole of her Thanksgiving hymn—Thanksgiving, not for the health that does not fail, not for the friends whose presence is "the warm, sweet heart of things," not for "the little hands that cling, and little feet that run, and make the earth a fitter thing"; not for the roof and bed, and fire, and food, and book when nights are long—

But, Lord, I know where on lone sands
A leper rots and cries;
Find thou my offering in his hands,
My worship in his eyes.
As thou dost give to him, thy least,
Thou givest unto me;
As he is fed I make my feast,
And lift my thanks to thee.

+ + +

E. H. C.

THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REV

Sept. 17/22

Increasing the Poetic Voltage

A Review by

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

LUTE AND FURROW. By Olive Tilford Dargan. Charles Scribner's Sons.

WOOD NOTES. By Mildred Whitney Stillman. Duffield & Co.

IN COLORS OF THE WEST. By Glenn Ward Dresbach. Holt & Co. $2.

THE VILLAGE STREET AND OTHER POEMS. By Frederick Faust. Putnam's Sons. $1.75.

WHEN Keats wrote of his desire to load every rift of his verse with ore, he meant very much the same thing as the impatient revolutionists of poetry in our own day, though they would word their need of a keener and richer expressiveness in terms rather of power and speed than of poetic wealth. Their demand, they might say, is for a higher verbal voltage. It is the demand in all the arts just now, and if the supply falls far short of the demand, no one but ultra-conservatives can quarrel with the demand. It was such higher voltage that Browning sought and attained. In his notes "On English Poetry," recently reviewed in these columns, Mr. Robert Graves has some pertinent remarks on what he calls "Putty." "The conscious part of composition is like the finishing of roughly shaped briars in a pipe factory. Where there are flaws in the wood, putty has to be used in order to make the pipe presentable. Only an expert eye can tell the putty when it has been colored over." To load every rift with putty rather than with ore is the danger of all poets, and to dispense with putty is an artistic obligation of which it is well to be strenuously reminded. It is because rhyme, in the wrong hands, leads to putty that some revolutionaries have set their faces against it; but, then, merely to write free verse is not to get rid of putty, by any means. Often it is quite the contrary. Some free verse seems to be all putty, and the old forms necessitate at least a certain amount of firm structural material. And, of course, the fault with some good verse, in old forms or new, is not always putty. In fact, we may detect no putty, yet feel a certain lack. Usually it is a lack of vitality, and, therefore, a lack of interest. Not infrequently one meets with verse that has many of the qualities of good poetry — even beauty, distinction, fresh observation and thought—and yet it fails to take hold of us. In spite of our realizing its possession of these qualities, we cannot get interested in it. In short, it does not compel us to read it; and when we have read it, because perhaps we feel that it deserves reading—the fault, maybe, our own—we, with all our good-will, cannot hold it in our memories. Unless poetry is as interesting as a romance, or as compelling as ragtime, we labor in vain that read it. Of course, it is in the nature of things that such poetry cannot be produced easily or often. The demand is an exacting one. At the same time, it is not only the great poets who live up to it. Lesser poets have often done it in their degree, and are still doing it. This high voltage of rhythmic and generally expressive vitality may, needless to say, charge the briefest lyric. Indeed, it is more necessary to the lyric than to any other form of poem, for unless a lyric be as keen as pain, or as lovely as dew, or as fragrant as honey, it is but an empty shell of words. An intense expressiveness of some kind is its whole existence. To take a new volume and measure it by such standards may seem exigent, yet what poet would be measured by less? And Mrs. Olive Dargan has already such serious work to her credit that it would be an impertinence to weigh her new book in other scales. It is a book of many themes, of feelings deep and delicate, of passionately held convictions, of frequent verbal felicity. Only a poet could have made it; but, all the same, it strikes me as containing, for the most part, rather sketches and notes for poems than poems finally wrought or sufficiently alive. I find little or no "putty" in Mrs. Dargan's poetry, but I confess to finding its voltage

lower than I had hoped. Even when she writes on those revolutionary matters which she has much at heart, we are disappointed at the vehemence which is natural and even necessary to such themes. Such poems as "In the Black Country" and "The Ballad of Trafalgar Square" are revolutionary in idea, but they entirely lack the revolutionary fire. Take this verse descriptive of the steel workers in England's "Black Country," near Birmingham:

But see where cavern windows
ghostly glow,
As a dead dragon's eyes yet
open burn,
Stripped figures like strange
beasts weave to and fro!
And suddenly we know how
beasts must yearn
Who have no way out but to
pass
Through fire to the green
grass.
These strong, who for the weak
make beauty sure,
How long will they endure
An earth of ashes and a sky of
brass?

Here both the imagery and the placid meter are ill chosen. The meter, again, of "The Ballad of Trafalgar Square" lacks the true ring, though from the point of view of the revolutionary propagandist the symbol Mrs. Dargan would convey is striking. As often happens with ambitious poems, the title is more than the poem. "Trafalgar Square," with all that it has come to mean, is a title that needs to be very vigorously lived up to. Again, Mrs. Dargan is handicapped with her quiet, philosophic meter. Indeed, too many of her poems fail from this lack of approriate rhythmic vitality. On this question of rhythmic life the theory of the "modernist" poets is indisputably right whatever we may think of their practice; though this theory, of course, is far from new with them. Probably the best statement of it was made long ago by Theodore Watts-Dunton in his famous essay on "Poetry," still fortunately preserved for us in the Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Unless the rhythm of any metrical passage," he wrote, "is so vigorous, so natural, and so free that it seems as though it could live, if need were, by its rhythm alone, has that passage any right to exist; and should it not, if the substance is good, be forthwith demetricized and turned into prose?" We are less aware of the rhythmic lack in Mrs. Dargan's verse in those poems which are able better to live by her real gift for suggesting beautiful pictures, and charging her verse with tenderness and perfume, as in what seems to me the most successful poem in this new volume, "Francesca (1904-1917)." Here we have a picture in varying meters of a young girl, lying in the languors of a mortal fever, tended by a friend whom she dreamily asks to talk to her of beautiful things. She seems asleep at first:

I gaze long at her face,
Thinking at last I shall know her;
For awake she is always hiding
In ripples and pools of change.
Waves of April flow round her,
And she is my willow witch
Weaving her web of winds
Above the blue water;
But she lifts her eyes,
Like two hours of June,
And is so nearly a rose
That tomorrow the dawn will be
lapping
Gold from her open heart.

The fevered girl asks to be told of "cool things":

Cool, my whisperer?
Then shall we walk again
Between the Winter and the
cliff
Where green things cling?—the
little venturers
That feed on shade, and tug at
scornful boulders
Till they are gay and gentle?
They were all there, lustrous and
shyly brave;
The fronds and tresses, finger's
and baby's palm;
The curling tufts, the plumelets
proudly niched,
And little unknown leaves
That make the cold her mother.

And the little drama ends with this vivid lyric:

If Death had taken my orange
tree,
Its gold-lit boughs, and magic
birds
Singing for me,
I would not bear, though bright
the dead,
This daunted head.
If Death had taken the one whose
care
My fortune feeds, my roof endows—
Leaving me bare—
I'd meet the world from some kind
door,
Gay as before * * *
But she was Beauty; planets
swing,
Ages toil, that one like her
May make dust sing;
And I, who held her hand, must go
Alone and know.

The bright beauty of this "Francesca" is happily undeniable, and, if Mrs. Dargan is seldom so fortunate, this is enough to reveal her as a true poet. Like all poets, she needs to be more careful in choosing themes germane to her talent, and to wait jealously for their true rhythm.

CAROLINA WOMAN WRITES LITERA

BY CHARLOTTE YOUNG.

Who is Fielding Burke, author of that tremendously stirring novel, "Call Home the Heart"? This conundrum went the rounds of literary critics last February and March when reviewers had examined the novel and unanimously agreed that it had every mark of experience and craftsmanship. Various critics ventured guesses as to the identity of "Fielding Burke," naming most of the southern writers as probable authors. Finally the riddle was answered by Lawrence Stallings in The New York Sun, who made the announcement that "Fielding Burke" is Olive Dargan of North Carolina.

For many years Mrs. Dargan has held a place in the first rank of American writers, having changed her literary medium the fourth time to take her place with the great novelists of all time when she wrote "Call Home the Heart," a love story of tremendous poignancy and power.

Mrs. Dargan was immediately recognized by discriminating critics on the appearance of her first book, which contained three poetic dramas. Of one of these, which was based upon the tragic life of the Empress Carlotta, and portrays the still unended struggle for Mexican liberty, John White Chadwick said, "It is the high water mark in poetic drama since Shakespeare." Another of these dramas, "Semiramis," was built around the Assyrian queen of that name, the hero being an Armenian. This drama was translated in Armenian. Her second volume, entitled, "Lords and Lovers and Other Dramas," took an equally high place.

Of this book James Huneker wrote a long review in The North American Review, saying, among other things appreciative of the author's genius, that "America indubitably has a new poet of great charm and power, who used blank verse as her mother tongue."

Edmond Clarence Stedman spoke of her "high and splendid verse," and called her a writer "of the royal line—a true porphyregenita."

Jessie Rittenhouse is another critic who early recognized the unusual merit of Mrs. Dargan's writings and still watches with deep interest for all that she writes. It was a great surprise, as Miss Rittenhouse pointed out, when Olive Dargan's fourth book proved to be a volume of lyrics. "Path Flower" was published in London by J. M. Dent & Co., and the author was immediately hailed as a lyrist of moving power. The poems in this book reflect the two dominant moods of the author, a passion for beauty and a protest for suffering caused by a mal-adjusted social system, the latter a cry which intensifies rather than diminishes the poetic quality of her verse, an unusual achievement. In this volume is the poem, "Gilead Road," rich in social content and poignant in protest, which contains the lines often quoted,

"Life is the search of God
For his own unity."

Her next book, "The Cycle's Rim," a sonnet sequence dedicated "to one drowned at sea," would have placed the poet among the immortals if this had been the only book from her pen. Such a mingling of passionate love and grief with intellectual clear-sight is seen more seldom than Halley's Comet. How sincere, how poignantly haunting is that perfect jewel, sonnet number one, of that matchless strand of fifty-two:

"Deep lies thy body, jewel of the sea,
Locked down with wave on wave. Pearl-drift among
The coral towers, and yet not thee, not thee!
So lightly didst thou mount, blue rung o'er rung,
The lustered ladder rippling from that land
Of strangely bowed and wooing wildernesses.
Province of dreams unwaning, dream yet banned
From sleepers in the sun; but thou, as presses
The lark that feels his song, sped to the sky,
O unrepressed, if thou wouldst choose be gone,
What sea-charm then could stay thee, bid thee lie
Too deep for cock-crow earth or heaven's dawn?
Yet must I chant these mortal staves
And lay my leaf of laurel on the waves."

From this lofty prelude as from a high mountain cliff leaps her Pegassus, nor once weakens in his flight. Yet how meekly does this lovely Laura, hymn her Petrarch:

"Alas, this Laura's lips are not blest banks
Where flows the marvel measure of the stream
Whose drops are words . . ."

And in that personal, yet universal note in the fifth sonnet, there is a quality which makes doubters forget to doubt, as the poet refers to a day

"When heaven was a flowering apple tree,
All earth a tender ring of April ground;
For we had come unto our day of days,
When our two souls and God made trothel feast;
He made the sun, but Love hath made the word
That new suns bore, when He no finger stirred."

Yet, in her deepest grief, she is not the "orphan of the universe." Rather is she the tender sister to all who grieve, especially to those who suffer from an unjust economic system. With consummate skill she mingles scathing satire in her music without marring the theme, as she cries, in the sixteenth sonnet:

". . . Shall we maim
The rising god? Lop off the giant's head
And stilt Tom Thumb? Forbid the living ground
Its wild variety, till smooth as lies
A magnate's lawn, at last the earth is round
That heavenward trundling with our polished prize,
God's laughter we may hear, low, lyrical,
So pleased is he with his pretty ball."

Into the next one she carries the theme further:

"Yet that were better than this giant sieve
Wherein mankind is rustled to and fro,
Saving coarse chaff while wasting winds receive
The fine and precious worth so shaken through.
Homeless, we can not see above a roof;
Naked, 'twere heaven to be gowned and shod;
'Twixt art and vision ever is the loaf:
Fed, clad, and housed, still do we dwarf our god,
Concerned to keep, nor be as others bare.
Oh, break the monstrous mesh with wisdom's flail
That tosses chaff and living



Olive Dargan, North Carolina Author.

TURE FOR ALL

grain doth spare.
Till, where loss ached, life surge imperial
And men [illegible] mountains be, lifting to s[illegible]
Unshroude[illegible]ining inequalities."

It is a temp[illegible] remain with "The Cycle's [illegible]eading these sonnets over a[illegible]er, since each reading confirms the first impression that here is a masterpiece. Quoting George Edward Woodberry, "Here is the old, antique artist stroke that wakes me up like a thunderclap on a clear morning, so rare is it nowadays, and so it lifts the spirit."

In her next book, "Lute and Furrow," Mrs. Dargan reaffirms her ability to

"Spin white eternity in a single line," as she does in that moving poem called "Defiance":

"Who knows how lone the sea must flow
Is lonelier than the sea. . ."

HER SEVENTH BOOK.

In her seventh book, Mrs. Dargan re-entered the field of literary drama. This volume, "The Flutter of the Gold Leaf and Other Dramas," she wrote in collaboration with Dr. Frederic Peterson, professor of psychiatry in Columbia University, New York. Again, in this book, her genius, a gem of many facets, shines clearest in the light of beauty or the shadow of human suffering.

In 1925, her eighth book, "Highland Annals," was published by Charles Scribner's Sons. This is a collection of eight short stories, founded on her experiences on her "farm which lay, or rather rose, in the Unakas." In the opinion of this writer, Mrs. Dargan's book is the only one which authentically portrays the people who live high up in the mountain coves. This is done with such sympathy and kindliness of insight, that these people cease to be curios, sixteenth century travelers marooned on mountain islands; they are as universally human as Ulysses and Helen and Uriah Heep.

After the publication of Highland Annals, the author determined to write no more, feeling that her last message had been given to a rapidly changing civilization, a crumbling economic system.

Valiently facing the future, however, she has put into that powerful novel, "Call Home the Heart," all the artistry, the tender human sympathy, the fiery espousal of the rights of the economically oppressed, the lyrical response to beauty, the word-magic which "burns holes in the pages," and shatters complacency, stored up in all her former volumes.

The hero and heroine of the story, Ishma and Britt, will take their places along with the immortal lovers in literature. Simple folks they are, these people of the North Carolina mountains. In one respect, at least, Ishma is different from former timeless heroines; love, to her, is not the whole of existence. She struggles against love, which came in the person of handsome, ballad-singing Britt Hensley, as bravely as she does against poverty and ugliness. She seems canquished by both. She and Britt toil together, trying to "get on" in the world. Fire, drought, and the clinging weight of shiftless relatives, prove too much. In a moment of desperation, Ishma flees down the mountain from it all. She mixes her life with the lives of other workers in a cotton mill at the foothills, a part of that heart-breaking and unended struggle between capital and labor.

"Call Home the Heart" is published by the house of Longmans in New York, and is to be published in London next fall. It went into its fourth printing after only a few weeks had passed since its publication in February of this year. It is steadily growing in popularity, and discriminating critics are predicting that it will win the Pulitzer prize for this year, as the "Cycle's Rim" won the prize of the Southern society of New York in 1916.

The author, when not living in New York or abroad, makes her home in West Asheville. Her house, an ancient structure, stands amid spacious stretches of lawn and flowers, with acres of woodland behind. Showing here and there through trumpet vines, clematis and climbing roses, are the curved lengths of

FROM
RECORD JUL 16 1922
Philadelphia, Pa.

SECTION THREE

TIME.

logs, placed there by sturdy pioneer hands. Within may be found every convenience for modern living, and many objects of beauty—rugs, vases, pictures, gathered in the owner's world-wanderings.

Olive Tilford was born in Kentucky of old Virginia stock who came pioneering into the west when it was opened to settlers. She entered Peabody college at the age of seventeen and received her degree from that institution two years later. She afterwards spent a year at Radcliffe college studying English and Philosophy. Here she failed to find the answer to the questions which were burning in her heart, such as "Why must some go hungry while there is enough for all?" Seeking an answer, she entered the busy mart of life, mixing her labor and her love with that of the race.

While at Radcliffe, she met young Pegrim Dargan, whose senior year at Harvard coincided with her own at Radcliffe. They were married and lived for six years in New York. Then they came to western North Carolina in search of health, freedom and the far horizon. Hints of the life on their mountain farm may be found in "Highland Annals." Illness followed and a long convalescence in Europe for Mrs. Dargan, and a tragic voyage to Cuba for Mr. Dargan. On this voyage he was drowned. This was in 1716. Mrs. Dargan returned to their farm in the Unakas. In 1925, she came to Asheville and has since then called that city home, with the exception of time spent in France, Switzerland and New York.

How little these facts of her life explain the sources of the mysterious streams which feed her genius, a personality as amazing, as changeful, as steady, as inexplicable as the sea.

Though conscious that she has a message of beauty and significance, Mrs. Dargan lives widely, significantly, sympathetically with humankind; then she writes for all time.

Already she has begun the sequel to "Call Home the Heart." Those who have followed the heroine, Ishma, along "the burning road of the questing heart," will await with eagerness the sequel.

Volume of New One-Act Plays

A Sombre Tragedy, a Pageant, a Bit of Propaganda.

"The Flutter of the Gold Leaf and Other Plays," by Olive Tilford Dargan and Frederick Peterson; Charles Scribner's Sons.

It seems rather unfortunate that so little encouragement is being given to writers of one-act plays. Outside of the various Little Theatres, there is practically no organization which confines itself to producing one-acter. There is the Shakespeare Players company, of New York, which has been performing in four Irish plays this summer, but the chief interest of that company lies in the plays of the sixteenth century, as its name suggests. The Portmantau Players, it is true, concern themselves with the shorter form of play. Yet it can be said that there is no steady market for the writer of one-acters, and that these people must compose more for the fun of the thing or in the hope of selling their works to some magazine than for production.

Scribner's Sons have taken the bull by the horns and published a small volume containing four interesting one-acters written by two prominent authors, Dr. Frederick Peterson, a psychiatrist, and Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, a poet of some note in this country.

The first piece in the volume is written by the two in collaboration and proves to be the most interesting of them all. Depicting the rise and fall of the aspirations of a studious youth, who is considered by the people of his village to be insane, it deals with the spiritual and mental borderland. It is a sombre tragedy of misunderstood hope, and almost convinces the reader that, in the eyes of the masses, hope is a sin and ambition mere folly.

A pageant called "Everychild," and also written in collaboration by the two, is a charming fantasy of childhood. It is of the "Blue Bird" type, being the story of how a fairy, Everychild, calls to her country the children of the slums and hospitals and streets. It is marred rather than improved by some mediocre poetry and vers libre.

The other two pieces, each written by one of the authors, are not astonishing in any feature. "Two Doctors at Akragas," by Dr. Peterson, is little more than propaganda for a certain religious sect, which is endeavoring to substitute itself for doctors and patent medicines. The other, called "The Journey," tells of the sacrifice of a Japanese girl, who realizes that Eastern Asia needs her lover to save it and that he will not heed the call so long as he has her to live for.

The technique of the four pieces is not of the conventional type, and for that reason may be looked upon somewhat askance. Yet the volume contains pleasant reading, and might serve to supply plays to amateur actors who are in need of fresh and unusual material.

ELIOT H. SHARP.

The State: Columbia, S. C. Sept 3rd 1922

LUTE AND FURROW

Olive Tilford Dargan.

Reviewed by George C. Taylor. U. N. C.

LUTE AND FURROW. By Olive Tilford Dargan. New York. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922.

South Carolina should be glad to lay whatever claim it may have to the author of the book of verse bearing the simple title "Lute and Furrow." Mrs. Dargan, though of Virginia stock, born in Kentucky and now living in North Carolina, married into the Dargan family of Darlington, S. C.

"Lute and Furrow" is the fifth of a series of books of poetry, all of which entitle her to a very high rank among living American poets or for that matter among the American poets of any day. An over critical world always eager to seek and find in the works of any poet long in the public eye a diminishing energy, will fail to find any signs of waning strength in this her last contribution.

It is very true that in this book there is to be detected in some of her poems a very radical departure in choice of theme and form of verse. But these are in the direction rather of increasing energy; they tend towards the rougher more virile forms of the Kipling school of poetry or towards the freer less conventional forms of what we are now pleased to call the new poetry. Those who like, or fancy they prefer always the new to the old in verse, will find this sort of poetry done as by the best of them.

The most characteristic type of Mrs. Dargan's verse, however, is not such as to appeal most to the rough and ready reader of today. It often deals with the most elusive of poetical materials and strikes out with startling boldness to deal with those subjects mostly to be found hovering on the outermost edges of our human thought and experience. One who demands always the easy and the obvious in literature, will after a pass or two get entirely out of patience with some of her work. The cocksure critic who boldly censures the occasional illusive quality of her verse in which a fellow poet would find perhaps her greater genius displayed, forgets that perhaps it is to him illusive because her reach exceeds his grasp, because she has explored regions of experience and feeling where we poor friends, the critics, can never follow. Often he will find in her poetry a theme developed which under another hand than hers would have been vague, indefinite and illusive, done so simply and with such lovely clearness that anyone who even pretends to the reading of poetry can catch and hold the content. So it is in the little thing called "Song," apparently as light as gossamer and yet bearing up with ease a great weight of thought and feeling.

The bird upon the ocean waste
With straining wing,
Fails not for in her breast
She bears an unbuilt nest.
A bough of spring.

And I who travel toward a west
That has no sun,
Faint not for in my breast
Thy love is still my rest
And harbor won.

Or take again a verse from "Francesca" where the idea is elaborated that anything else taken out of life except the one thing which was taken would have left life still livable, where the most difficult of the difficult in verse is apparently so easily and simply done:

If Death had taken my orange tree
Its gold-lit boughs, and magic birds
Singing for me.
I would not bear, though bright the dead,
This daunted head.

But she was Beauty; planets swing,
And ages toil, that one like her
May make dust sing;
And I, who held her hand, must go
Alone and know.

Or the verses all too brief in "The Compact" which carry the theme of the irony of one's fate in planning one lovely death and meeting quite another, the irony of it to both the living and the dead!

The poplar trembles on the hill
Where once you stood and said
'When I am down for good or ill,
Make here my mountain bed.

"When from my green to your white door
These leaves their signal pass,
I'll quiet lie and listen for
Your foot upon the grass."
But now the sea has made your grave,
Far from your hill that grieves;
And I look down in every wave
To beckoning poplar leaves.

Or "On the Mountain," where to the end the illusive remains illusive and yet somehow satisfies, in a vague and indefinable fashion, one's sharpest desire for beauty:

She passes like a running flame.
He did not see her, but the leaves she touched
Were edged with proud fire,
And the wind blew haughtily all day
Above her track.

A deer by a spring looked at him and said
Do you think you can overtake one
Who is fleeter than I?
And drank and nibbled as if autumn had not come
With winter under her apron.

The deer knew that high up
All the leaves were brown,
And the wind whipped them sullenly,
And a trail of white ashes lay in the road;
But he who was only a man, ran on.

Or again:

And that other whose music may be
As a flight of birds to the sea;
To the far island beaches made brave
With the feet of tomorrows; where strain
The lifters of stone from the grave
Of the world we have dreamed of and slain.

After steeping oneself in verse like this one finds his faculty of eye and ear amazed as he passes into Mrs. Dargan's verse of the realistic rough stuff in verse which the reading world now demands, or which we fancy it demands, since Kipling started the ball rolling. There are the poems, "Sall's Gap," and "Released," realistic stories in verse of somewhat the Bret Harte-Kipling variety for those who like such things, fine in their way, but belonging to the class of poems which never can break into the class of the greatest poetry. A few verses from "Released," with its South Carolina background and local color, will give a suggestion of what the author can do in the way of the latest thing in poetry when she wants to:

We came to the bare, flat Carolina land,
Where the lemon haze of the hot horizon
Crept closer and closer, like a circling tiger.

The sun was a merciless burning-glass
Fixed above us;
The snake of smoke leaving the engine
Tried to writhe away from it.
* * * * * * *

The woman came out of that toasting box
And climbed on the train.
She had the face that marries at seventeen
Out of wonder and wistfulness,
And at twenty-seven is mothering five.
* * * * * *

"Yes'm, it's hard when the biggest can't more'n wash himself.
It was growin' twelve when I quit last night.
All the little shirts and dresses to do up.
An' gettin' out at three did cut into my sleep.
But I've got this far, an' I like to travel, don't you?

"No'm, I'm not pinin'.

"No'm, I'm not afraid I can't raise 'em.
Seems to me I've got a chance now.
The baby'll soon be out o' my lap;
An'—you see—there won't be any more."

She whispered it,
But I felt the words as a shout.
The wilted face gleamed;
S' was Deborah singing.

Then there is the piece which gives the latter half of the name to the title of her book, "Lute and Furrow," verses with a fine massive strength with all the slap-you dash-you force of the Kiplingese song and with none of his eternal flippancy. Where will one hope to find a more stirring summons back to the soil than this?

What is this sudden gaiety that shakes
the gravest boughs?
A voice is calling fieldward, 'tis time
to start the ploughs!
To set the furrows rolling while all
the old crows nod,
And deep as life, the kernel, to cut the
golden sod!
The pen, let nations have it—we'll
plough a while for God.

When half the things that must be
done are greater than our art,
And half the things that must be done
are smaller than our heart,
And poorest gifts are dear to burn on
altars unrevealed,
Like music comes the summons, the
challenge from the weald—
"They tread immortal measure who
make a mellow field!

The planet may be pleasant, alluring
in its way;
But let the ploughs be idle, and none
of can stay.
Here's where there is no doubting, no
ghosts uncertain stalk,
A-traveling with the plough beam, beneath the sailing hawk,
Cutting the furrow deep and true
where Destiny will walk.

The most remarkably inspired portion of the verse in this volume, however, somehow falls naturally into the older verse forms against which the new school of poetry, bent on saying even the newest things the newest kinds of ways, is trying hard to set its back; such as the ballad or the sonnet. Few living writers have caught as genuinely as Mrs. Dargan the spirit of the poets of the greatest of all ages of English poetry. Her best verse drops into the setting of Elizabethan days as naturally as if it had been born and bred there, and bred there much of it is. What could be more strangely beautiful than "It Will be a Hard Winter." It is difficult to better this in ballad vein:

They say the blue king jays have
flown
From woods of Westchester;
So I to Luthany shall flee,
But I will make no stir;
For who fair Luthany would see
Must set him forth alone.

The harp-built walls of Luthany
Are builded high and strong
To shelter singer, fool and seer,
And glad they live and long.
All others die who enter there,
But they are safe, these three.

The seer can warm his body through
By some far fire he sees;
The fool can naked dance in snow;
The singer—as he please!
And which I be of these, Oh, ho!
That is a guess for you.

Once in a thousand years, they say,
The walls are beaten down;
And then they find a singer dead,
But swift they set a crown
Upon his lowly careless head,
And sing his song for aye.

So I to Luthany shall flee
While here the winter raves;
God send I go not as one blind
A-dancing upon graves;
God save a madman if I find
War's heel on Luthany.

Or again in "The Texas Primrose" where she sings a flower, never rhymed before in the manner of Wordsworth or Coleridge and yet in a fashion all her own, lines lyrical among the best of American lyrics of which there are strangely few:

So shyly glowing, meekly gay,
And so for music meet,
I wonder what would happen, say,
If I were Herrick, sweet.

Surely he'd smuggle you somehow
Into the Muses' hall,
And proud court flowers there should bow
To a new queen lineal.

And Grasmere's sage, if hereabout
He found your face at dawn,
Would silent sit the full day out,
And dark would come too soon.

Then mumbling home he'd take you, too,
Imprisoned in a line;
No more would you need sun or dew
Who there so fixed would shine.

O delicate barbarian,
I've no immortal art,
To sing you as the laurelled can,
But travel in my heart.

And though my way be bare and brown,
And miles grow long for me,
I vow I will not set you down
This side of Castaly.

She has caught the ancient mystery of the old school too in the only two sonnets to be found in this volume. It would be difficult to find many sonnets in English poetry better than her best. "Evening Above Saranac" is one of them.

Thou, unhorizoned as eternity,
Yet of time's rounded hour thy mirror making,
Thy heart the sun, thy hand the gathering sea,
Yet in a flower thine ample lodging taking;
Thou who dost vein the marble and the leaf,
Mak'st thought and dream shine through the jungle's scarring,
Till from a scented reed, as summer brief,
Man breathes the forest some dim star is wearing;
These are thy shadows; here I strip me free
Of myths and days; of grieving and of fearing;
Tatters of fame, and love that bannered me;
Here bare me as the moonlight, only hearing,
As in thy music, universes flow,
And even as music to thy silence go.

In this sonnet as in other portions of her verse the writer succeeds in expressing the power of beauty, just beauty, whether in a human face or in a flower or in natural landscape, to allay the pain of living, as few of the immortals ever have succeeded in expressing it. Another instance is this:

And if a daisy look at me,
The wheeling world
Seems then to stand
Contentedly
At journey's end.

And if when all is said and done, the reader of today can not care, God help him, for the old, old way of saying the best that can be thought and felt by human beings, why he can find a combination just as great of both strength and beauty in her verse occasionally in poems which sound more modern, modern with a vengeance if one must have it so. If one can find in modern poetry more downright strength and greater loveliness combined than in the following verses let some one cite them if he can:

Though a frozen sun awaits,
Dropsied with a glut of spheres,
When the swallowed earth completes
Cycle of her whirling years,
We'll have saved eternity
This greater thing—a mind that won
Its way to destiny's last play
And lost the game to God alone.

Who knows how lone the sea must flow,
Is lonelier than the sea;
A greater than the hills is he
Who feels them pass from sand to sand;
And who knows Death, to Death may go
With almoner's hand.



Dispatch
Columbus, Ohio
MAR 14 1925

Ledger changes orientation

utrage, a revolutionist tells him that surely now at last he must give his voice for war. Adrian answers:—

"War? Yes. And I will use the strongest of earthly weapons, the arms of peace. The powers that upbuild are as invincible as the universe. By them it stands. Only by their toleration do the forces of destruction live. Toleration? Only by the *support* of the powers of peace do the powers that destroy exist. Is not the army of the Czar fed by us, clothed by us, paid by us? And, if we refuse to give, must it not beg of us? If he who works not shall not eat, what is the doom of the destroyer? The sower shall not sow for him, the reaper shall not reap for him, the builder shall not build for him, the physician shall not heal him, the scholar shall not teach him, the lawyer shall not plead for him, no trade shall supply him, no craft shall assist him. The mills shall be silent, the wheels shall not turn, the wires shall be dumb, until he cries out, 'Peace, thou art master: let me be so much as thy servant!' . . . Friends, friends, we have been searching earth for the weapon already in our grasp. The woman at the loom, the mujik in the field, the workman on the housetop, the man at the wire, the throttle, the wheel, hold it in their hands. To know its might—to use it together—that is all. *Together!*"

It will be remembered that in Russia eight years ago there was a great general strike, like the one now going on in Belgium for manhood suffrage, only that in Russia the people were striking for the elementary rights of human beings,—freedom of speech and of the press, freedom from arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, and exile. Under pressure of fear, the Czar granted everything, only to take all the new rights back, one after another, when the pressure was removed.

Mrs. Dargan has remarkable gifts, both poetic and dramatic. Another beautiful play showing the triumph of love over hate is "Kidmir," in her new book, "The Mortal Gods."

Kidmir is a fortress on a height in Asia Minor. The time is that of the Crusades. The hero, Bertrand, is a young English knight, bred a monk, but later released from his vows through money and influence, in order that his father, all whose other sons have perished, may not be left without an heir. Bertrand loves Ardia of Kidmir, but is still troubled in conscience by his monastic vow. He sings:—

"O fires that build upon the sea
Till wave and foam of ye are part,
And burn in mated ecstasy,
Ye build again within my heart."

Overcome by his attachment to Ardia, Bertrand begs her to marry him; but she sees that he has yielded to love, not to conviction, and refuses him. She will not cause him remorse. In answer to his reproaches, she tells him that it will be harder for her than for him:—

"You have the world to feed on, need not eat
Your heart as I must—I, the woman. Dear,
Where Kidmir cliffs climb highest to the sky
I'll keep my watch. . . .
My Kidmir shall seem lowly, where I walk
With stintless ache beneath the cedar boughs
On pains' moon nights. And, oh, the Springs to pass,
When each bride-bud shall be a wound to me,
When grasses young, and softly pushing moss,

Shall urge my feet like fire, and I must stand
Quite still . . . quite still . . . with all my unborn babes
Dead in my heart."

Bertrand's doubts are removed by what seems to him a sign from heaven. In his joy he sees the world transfigured:—

"Tears that silvered graves
Globed in their pearl the immortal hope of men,
And seemed as beautiful as prophecy
Burning in its own truth. Aye, where a man
Fell murdered, crying 'I forgive,' the ground
Sprang as a garden."

But the lovers' joy is short. The enmity of their relatives parts them at the altar. To save Bertrand from a death of torture at the hands of the Mohammedans, Ardia stabs him to the heart, and dies beside him. She says to him, before striking the merciful blow:—

"The life we thought to live—
That might have failed, and killed the dream now safe
From tarnish of the days. Earth has enough
Of blind and baffled lives, but great her need
Of dreams. And ours we leave with her, unworn,
Unpaled, warm round the love-seed she shall nurse
To million budded life."

There is more spiritual uplift in some of Mrs. Dargan's dramas than in a dozen ordinary sermons.

BOSTON, MASS.



Ready for a day in her outdoor "hide-away"

"You may call me of the house if on fire — not otherwise"

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.—REPUBLICAN
APR 1 1913

REVIEWS OF NEW BOOKS.

A HIGHLY POETIC DRAMATIST.

Olive Dargan's Blank Verse Tragedy of Social Philosophy in Romantic Allegory.

"The Mortal Gods and Other Plays" (Scribner's), by Olive Tilford Dargan, is a volume of three poetic dramas in uncommonly gifted blank verse, the two besides that which gives the volume its title being "A Son of Hermes" and "Kidmir." "The Mortal Gods" is a highly-colored and impassioned romance with many passages of rare beauty, which, in spite of its imaginary surroundings in a far country, is very clearly a reflection of modern social philosophy and to no small degree an allegory of capitalistic greed. It tells the story of Hudibrand, king of Assaria, of Hernda, his daughter, and of Chartrien, a prince of Assaria, and of other lesser characters. Hudibrand is a king who rules not, as his name might suggest, with the aid of helmeted men at arms in an earlier century, but through financial manipulations, the greedy exploitation of natural resources and the merciless exploitation of men and women. Hernda is pictured as a heroine who has accepted the luxuries of the old order without understanding what they mean until her lover, Chartrien, whom she first considers a traitor, begins to open her eyes at the moment when she in her misunderstanding has betrayed his friend and earned his scorn. But once awakened the princess proves herself of truly noble stuff. She braves the dangers of a cruel prison camp conducted by the premier of a neighboring country where Chartrien has been held and is about to be murdered under a "fugitive law," like that of Mexico, in order that she may acquit herself by aiding in the escape of his friend and may learn upon what real evils dominion like her father's is founded. The prison camp, whose unhappy inmates work in the fields and are flogged to death, although fanciful suggests the explotation of some great industrial corporation.

In spite of the sordidness of that for which the allegory stands, and which more often and more easily is treated with the method of grim realism, Mrs Dargan's command of melodious and nobly-impassioned blank verse, together with her creative imagination, has enabled her to fashion a drama of much fascination and high literary quality. In her hands that which so commonly becomes a stiff and pedantic medium, is notable alike for an ease, a plasticity, and a richness which are the witnesses to unusual poetic power. It is an old lament that in America the audience is small that is capable of appreciating the essentially literary drama. But those who are capable will find in "The Mortal Gods" and Mrs Dargan's other plays a rare pleasure and satisfaction. The state of American letters will never be hopeless while such work is produced.

Christian Register May 22nd 1913

A Peace Play.

BY ALICE STONE BLACKWELL.

With so much that is low and materialistic about the modern theatre, it is a joy to come across a play which is wholly uplifting and noble. Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, whose drama, "The Shepherd," is about to be brought out in Boston, is the author of three volumes of plays, all of which contain true spiritual refreshment,—"Semiramis," "Lords and Lovers" (including "The Shepherd"), and "The Mortal Gods."

The scene of "The Shepherd" is laid in Russia in 1905. The hero, Adrian Lavrof, is a teacher among the peasants, so much beloved that he is affectionately called "The Shepherd of Lonz." Like Tolstoy, he is a believer in non-resistance; and the play brings out vividly his struggles to hold to his doctrine—and to hold the peasants to it—under ever-growing provocation. They are flogged unmercifully. He tells them, "The blow we receive falls on our bodies only; the blow we give falls back upon our souls. . . . The slave can always rise above the master by forgiving him." A discussion between Adrian and a revolutionist sets the two points of view in sharp contrast:

"*Gregorief.* There is but one way to fight the devil.

"*Adrian.* If you use his own fire, you must live in hell to do it.

"*Gregorief.* And we don't live in hell now, I suppose!

"*Adrian.* Not an everlasting one. You have the selfishness of the living generation, Gregorief, that consumes as its candle the sun of the unborn.

"*Gregorief.* Bah! Each generation must fight for its own breath.

"*Adrian.* Who conquers with a club will rule with a club. . . . Let civilization wait another century rather than deliver her flag to the hands of murderers!

"*Gregorief.* And where is it now if not in the hands of murderers?

"*Adrian.* It is not in their hands, Gregorief, but in ours, that are yet clean."

A young poet says that Adrian's star is "The great love that makes one heart beat in another's body; that makes me faint in Russia when a beggar starves in India; that fades your cheek with the girls' at an English loom; that turns the comfortable American out-of-doors with the driven Jew; that gives one color to every flag; and makes the might of the strongest nation the right of the Kaffir babe."

But he tells the Shepherd that they have been wrong in thinking it was enough simply to turn the other cheek:

"No one has a right to happiness while others are suffering because of things that are in the power of man to help. The *good* people who forget what is out of sight,—as if misery or duty were a question of eyes and ears,—they are the most to blame. If they would all help—just all of the good!"

The play is full of thrilling dramatic action, as one after another the Shepherd's nearest and dearest fall victims to the prevailing tyranny. After a crowning

examples of the modern. Mrs. Dargan's conception of character is as powerful, as vivid, and as varied as the graces of her poetic expression. She is extraordinarily objective. It is never she, but always the personages who speak. And they speak to the purpose of poetic drama in a remarkable degree. In the first place they speak poetically; in the second they portray themselves and carry on the action; lastly, they often speak with a sustained souffle, a prolonged note that results in splendid passages of noble verse, running the gamut of the emotions and the passions with varied cadences and modulated phrasing, and not merely ejaculating a sufficient number of lines to forward the movement of the plot. Thus we have once more tirades that are worth while, as well as the give and take of colloquy that supplies vivacity and animation. Indeed, her power of sustained flight is quite as distinguished in Mrs. Dargan's poetry as are her felicities of detail — which latter have themselves a certain largeness, a certain amplitude and elevation, that would naturally argue the former. The most abiding impression the reader obtains from her dramas is the impression of the whole in each instance. The

present volume contains four plays: "Lords and Lovers", in two parts (each an organic

present volume contains four plays: "Lords and Lovers", in two parts (each an organic unity as are the two together and, therefore, constituting quite a remarkable artistic feat); "The Shepherd", a play in prose; and "The Siege". "Lords and Lovers" is a drama of England during the reign of Henry III, who is one of the characters; "The Shepherd" is a wonderfully effective and moving play of the present time in Russia; and "The Siege" is a drama of the time of Dionysius the Younger in Sicily. We have resisted the temptation to quote lines and passages. Once yielded to it would have quickly carried us beyond the limits of our space. But we must add a last word, to emphasize the truly Elizabethan character of the dramas: they are obviously capable of being acted as well as read -- that is to say, they are absolutely genuine examples of their form of literature.

was saturated with the Authorized Version impeaches the marked individuality of his diction. Shakespeare is not a model to Mrs. Dargan to be studied or imitated. There is indeed nothing express or studied in her style. Its pure spontaneity is its greatest force and its greatest charm. But nothing that is worth anything is independent of derivation, and the tradition that she has followed, more or less unconsciously, and that has flowered anew in her verse, is simply that of the highest and best and most stimulating in English poetry. Shakespeare has many sides. It is a commonplace that no writer has so many. But that side of him in virtue of which every natural and moral phenomenon appeared to his mind translated into other terms as well as stated in its own, and in virtue of which, therefore, the simplest of his statements is poetized by the imagination and, so to speak, purged of prose, is the main characteristic of his diction. And this, in her own measure and degree, Mrs. Dargan has caught — as any one might ~~##~~ who, as Lamb said about writing like Wordsworth, "has a mind to." It is, to be sure, the striking thing about Mrs. Dargan that she has a mind to. At all

events, this Elizabethan trait is eminently characteristic of her expression, with the

events, this Elizabethan trait is eminently characteristic of her expression, with the result that whatever else it may be it is thoroughly poetic. Her attitude of mind, in fact, is that of the poet before the vehicle of prose has been perfected. There is no virtuosity, no search for beautiful words, no pursuit of the recondite. The language is simply shot through with imaginative power.

It would, however, be a very imperfect characterization of Mrs. Dargan's poetic faculty to dwell solely on her diction, her language, her imagery. She is as definitely and distinctly a dramatic poet as she is a poet at all. She can take an action, divine its potentialities of tragic significance, and conduct it, step by step, to a climax of import and intensity. She sees it in scenes. Her plays seem to unfold, to unroll themselves, which is only another way of saying that they are conceived centrally and completely and constructed with consummate art. The drama lies fatalistically in the characters of the dramatis personae themselves, and is not imposed on them from without — as Lowell maintained it was in the Greek drama, and as, at least, it is in the inferior

Or a swallow's wing. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons; price $1.75.)

Poems From the

sacrificed in statement of any other sort. Or else it is the occasional brief lyric ejaculation of an apothegm or a sentiment, unsustained by that creative faculty which made the Greeks call the poet the maker. In other words — and particularly among us, perhaps — the poetic impulse, which is probably universal, is either not so idiosyncratic as to distinguish itself in expression from metrical prose, or else is not vital and important enough to make its expression poetically significant.

A born poet, like Mrs. Dargan, affirms her title at once. Poetry is her natural, native, normal expression not at all because she has "the gift of song" or lisps in numbers, for the numbers come, but because she thinks poetically. Poetic diction is the stuff of her perception and reflection. She sees and feels in images, in figure, in anything but propositions. And the beautiful in language as well as the true, the fioritura as well as the fact, seem to come synchronously into her imagination and take on a form of fusion in her vocabulary. The very warp and woof of her verse is of poetic texture. Turned into prose presentation it would still in quality be poetic.

The most ordinary statement, the barest narrative, the baldest record that she has

The most ordinary statement, the barest narrative, the baldest record that she has to set down is tinged and transfigured by this peculiar heightening and intensification of accent and color which transmutes it from the exact into the exalted. This means, of course, that the usual processes of the intelligence, the intellect pure and simple, are in her case tinctured with an intellectual emotion in a way that quite lifts them out of the sphere of mere apprehension and gives them a power of stirring the susceptibility as well as appealing to the mind. In diction, in short, Mrs. Dargan's poetic gift is not only particularly authentic and idiosyncratic, but will stand comparison with that of any poetry her countrymen have as yet produced.

Where did she get it? How did she come by it? The answer is as obvious as it is interesting, and one might, if didactically inclined, commend it to the attention of contemporary versifiers. She got it from Shakespeare. She is saturated with Shakespeare — with the Elizabethans in general, but with Shakespeare in particular. And saying this is no more an impeachment of her originality than saying that Ruskin

communicates them. And those who still want and properly want a warmth of conception in the novel, an affirmation of human nature as well as a formula of salvation—those who ask that fiction be the mirror of life's emotions, hopes, fears, disappointments and fulfillments, will find in the Fielding Burke of *A Stone Came Rolling* some one who believes as they do—as well as some one who stands prepared to accept the responsibilities of the day and age.

About the Author—

With the publication of *Call Home the Heart,* in 1932, Fielding Burke won immediate recognition as an important novelist. The *Saturday Review of Literature* said, *"Call Home the Heart* is perhaps the best novel yet written of industrial conflict in contemporary America." The *N. Y. Herald-Tribune "Books"* said, "Most other pictures of Southern mountain life dwindle into mere picturesqueness beside the obvious reality—humorous and beautiful as well as



Fielding Burke

grim—of this one." The *New Masses* called it "a work of a high literary order," and said that it "belongs to the pioneer novels in the literature of the American working class." *A Stone Came Rolling* is the author's first book since *Call Home the Heart.*

Though previous to 1932 Fielding Burke had not written novels, she had gained a considerable reputation as a poet, under another name. She was born in the South, of an old Virginia family, and has lived in various parts of the South as well as in New York and abroad. Of recent years she

By William Gary Brownell

The Book Buyer. November, 1906. 1.

Mrs. Dargan's Dramas

Some years ago Mrs. Dargan published a volume of plays in which those qualified to judge recognized unusual promise. The present volume is performance. It richly fulfills the promise of the earlier work, and its publication is, in fact, a literary event. The term has sometimes been abused, but in this case it is fully justified. "Lords and Lovers" will introduce to the reading public a new poet, and a poet of real power and authentic lineage. It is difficult to conceive of an incident of more interest from the literary point of view. Poets abound, it is true, and America has its share of them. But it is perfectly well understood that the verse they write is, with rare exceptions, quite negligible as literature. It lacks the self-justifying title to its own particular form of expression, even when it is not, as so often it is, mere metrical experimentation. Smooth or rough, ingenious or ingenuous, simple or elaborate, it is apt to maintain itself as poetry by its form rather than its content; by its rhythmical or other metrical felicities rather than by a substance that spontaneously and harmoniously models itself in poetic form with an integral fitness which would be

Editorial Board:
GRANVILLE HICKS
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The Book Union Selection for

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A Stone Came Rolling contains those qualities we are all most eager to find in the novel: strong characterizations, a spread of canvas, a rush of events. It moves, in other words, in the midst of life. Dealing with the people first introduced into *Call Home the Heart*—but in every respect a rounded story in its own right—this book has to do with contemporary issues in a Piedmont mill town, where the problem of individual lives becomes inseparable from the problem of the community. The tie-up is all the more telling because Miss Burke's individuals reveal such pronounced strength of character and personality. Here are no average citizens, no social symbols, no useful examples—but men and women. Here are not people who merely nod or squirm as life runs past them, but those who think and fight, suffer and die.

The town of Dunmow—a settlement older than the American Revolution—is for the most part old in its thinking. Some of its people have come there, ignorant and unworldly, from the mountains near at hand; most people have lived there too long; Negroes there are "niggers"; it is overrun—cowed, retarded, exploited—by religion. Neighborhood farmers are losing their farms, underpaid mill workers are regularly receiving additional wage-cuts. The town lies in the shadow of the past—a dead, deceptive past still waving its flags but no longer in possession of its guns; a past that cannot help, and must perforce betray, the future. The story of this book is in reality a record of how, one after another, certain people in the town awoke to a perception of these truths; of the conflict that ensued in their personal lives; and finally of the social conflict that stirred the town.

Bly Emberson, for example, is a lovable and benevolent mill owner married to a religion-ridden woman in need of

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Editorial Board: MALCOLM COWLEY ROBERT W. DUNN HENRY HART
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The Book Union Selection for December—

A STONE CAME ROLLING

By FIELDING BURKE

Publishers' Trade Edition, $2.50; *To Book Union Members,* $1.40.

Reviewed by LOUIS KRONENBERGER

A Stone Came Rolling contains those qualities we are all most eager to find in the novel: strong characterizations, a spread of canvas, a rush of events. It moves, in other words, in the midst of life. Dealing with the people first introduced into *Call Home the Heart*—but in every respect a rounded story in its own right—this book has to do with contemporary issues in a Piedmont mill town, where the problem of individual lives becomes inseparable from the problem of the community. The tie-up is all the more telling because Miss Burke's individuals reveal such pronounced strength of character and personality. Here are no average citizens, no social symbols, no useful examples—but men and women. Here are not people who merely nod or squirm as life runs past them, but those who think and fight, suffer and die.

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an analyst. His home life is undermining him, but out of loyalty to his wife he will not face the fact. And out of loyalty to his wife he will not face another fact—that he is in love with Ishma Hensley, the fully-formed, courageous, happily married moutain woman who works in his mill. But Bly *does* face the fact that the economic system which keeps him well provided for has broken down in Dunmow; and when the mill workers, faced with another wage-cut, go out on strike, Bly breaks with the confederacy of mill owners, keeps his hands employed at good wages and prepares for ruin. One man cannot successfully buck the system; and the knowledge of that fact, coupled with the crisis in his marital life, proves too much for Bly, who goes down under the weight of failure.

Yet it is not entirely failure. Bly has left something of a mark on the town, on the workers, on his son Martin. There are fresh and better seasoned recruits for the battle; and the real battle now begins in deadly earnest. The rest of the book—which it is for the reader to investigate—is a narrative of confusion, personal sacrifice, personal tragedy, defeat and something like victory. It is a narrative of the life of America today, where as yet the issue is not clear, but where the issues are.

If one feels throughout this book the beat of a pulse, it is for two reasons. There is first of all the various, rebellious life of the town, the quickened personal reaction among people so strong-natured as Ishma, Britt, Martin, Ned Hensley, Derry Unthank, Fairinda and a great many others; there is the constant press of events. But what one feels equally is the emotion of the author who, without permitting it to engulf her, has written out of her heart. *A Stone Came Rolling* is the work of a humane writer, of some one who is by nature an idealist. And the feeling which has gone into this book gives it, no less than the events of the book itself, a pulse. But it is feeling which refuses to be squandered or misdirected, or even to translate itself merely into pathos. It is feeling strengthened by intelligence, and expended upon convictions: the conviction that life is fundamentally messed up in America today; the conviction that even fine natures, or rather fine natures most of all, cannot survive or even sidestep that mess by using the old prescriptions; the conviction that life must follow a new and entirely different system of values. Perhaps—though quite possibly she has—Fielding Burke has not arrived at all this by strict logic. If not, she has done so as a poet, poets being the truest revolutionaries by virtue of their vision. But it does not matter whether by vision or by logic she has arrived at such conclusions and acquired such convictions. The point is that she has, and that in *A Stone Came Rolling* she unmistakably

STON HERALD, SATURDAY, JUNE 24,

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OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN

Her Poems, "Lute and Furrow," Are Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

LUTE AND FURROW

Good Poetry from a Mountain Farm in North Carolina

Lute and Furrow, by Olive Tilford Dargan; Charles Scribner's Sons.

In no academic sense is it to be said that the poems of Mrs. Dargan "smack of the soil." She lives on a mountain farm in North Carolina and it is not difficult, with the evidence of these poems at hand, to believe the assurance that from her field to her study is a frequent and easy transition. Mrs. Dargan has offered us earlier volumes, dramas in blank verse and one volume of sonnets, "The Cycle's Rim." This latter volume in 1916 won the $500 prize of the Southern Society of New York, for the best book of the year by a southern author.

"Lute and Furrow" is a collection of Mrs. Dargan's lyric verse, about 60 poems in all, some of them breathing the beauty of streams, fields and mountain woods, and some of them of classic origin. A few of the poems reflect foreign travel, notably one of the longer ones, "Ballad of Trafalgar Square." Here and there we find poems, as "Home" and "Burning Bridges," that carry a vigorous note of criticism which is alien to the serene mood in which most of the poems are written. So far as one brief poem may fairly be quoted, the verses entitled "Doris" will illustrate Mrs. Dargan's lyrical style and the elusive charm of her lines.

The ghost of Love walks by her,
To church and to the play.
With pipe and chuckle nigh her,
The twilights go his way.

Admire his ease in carving;
His smile by candle light.
He has no thought of starving,
This ghost with appetite.

But Love's red heart goes burning
Where the wild road sings no more;
And there'll be no returning;
A ghost guards well his door.

"Lute and Furrow."

Miss Jane Frances Winn writes interestingly in the St. Louis "Globe-Democrat" of Olive Tilford Dargan's volume bearing this title, and published by Charles Scribner's Company. "Mrs. Dargan lives on a farm in North Carolina, and the spirit of the fields and the richness thereof have inspired the verses that charm with their beauty and touch the heart with their hint of the deep down sympathy with the human race, whether for Deborah singing that there will be no more children for the soldier who has seen 'the dark thing,' or sorrow for the elusive Francesca. 'Lute and Furrow' has beautiful patterns woven into it, the still winter, spring slipping in on sandals of moss, the voice calling that it is time to set the plow, the deep-toned marching music of the plow in the furrows."

"We'll set the furrows rolling, and drop the yellow corn,
We'll plow along the universe that babies may be born.
Ay, no more time for fooling, here's task without a bound,
It's not the same old earth now that's spinning us around;
It's Jupiter and Neptune when the plow is in the ground.

"How light, how light the heart grows with something surely done;
When all the plows are going and all the tasks are one.
Then Fame's a lass that smirks too late; the sun's a brother lout;
The moon's a lantern in our hand; the stars are fieldmen stout;
Oh, luck to die in plowing time; 'twill just be one step out."

THE BOSTON HERALD, SATURDAY, JUNE

Bookish Chat and Comment

By John Clair Minot



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* * *

"Lute and Furrow."

Miss Jane Frances Winn writes interestingly in the St. Louis "Globe-Democrat" of Olive Tilford Dargan's volume bearing this title, and published by Charles Scribner's Company. "Mrs. Dargan lives on a farm in North Carolina, and the spirit of the fields and the richness thereof have inspired the verses that charm with their beauty and touch the heart with their hint of the deep down sympathy with the human race, whether for Deborah singing that there will be no more children for the soldier who has seen 'the dark thing,' or sorrow for the elusive Francesca. 'Lute and Furrow' has beautiful patterns woven into it, the still winter, spring slipping in on sandals of moss, the voice calling that it is time to set the plow, the deep-toned marching music of the plow in the furrows."

"We'll set the furrows rolling, and drop the yellow corn,
We'll plow along the universe that babies may be born.
Ay, no more time for fooling, here's task without a bound,
It's not the same old earth now that's spinning us around;
It's Jupiter and Neptune when the plow is in the ground.

"How light, how light the heart grows with something surely done;
When all the plows are going and all the tasks are one.
Then Fame's a lass that smirks too late; the sun's a brother lout;
The moon's a lantern in our hand; the stars are fieldmen stout;
Oh, luck to die in plowing time; 'twill just be one step out."

FROM
RECORD
Philadelphia, Pa.

JUL 9 1922

Poet Sings of Many Themes

"Lute and Furrow" Abounds With Fine Imagination.

"Lute and Furrow," by Olive Tilford Dargan; Charles Scribner's Sons.

A poet-farmer, whose acres are on the mountains of North Carolina, is Olive Tilford Dargan. Mrs. Dargan was born in Kentucky, but her opportunities for travel and residence in the big cities and pleasant town of America and England have been numerous. She has written several volumes of dramas and poems and prose. She received a $500 prize awarded by the Southern Society of New York for the best work published by a Southern writer in 1916. "The Cycle's Rim," which won her prize, is a volume of lyric poems.

"Lute and Furrow" is a collection of poems of many subjects—of life and experiences at home and abroad, of people and places, of emotions, of comedies and tragedies. Mrs. Dargan here gives further proof of imagination, of a high creative faculty, of warmth in expression and wide sweep of vision. She sings of the south of England—of the sea and of romance, of love and youth and the things thereof.

Mrs. Dargan sings of the "joy and the rushing pulse that in beauty's beginning exults." And further:

What is this sudden gaiety that shakes
the grayest boughs?
A voice is calling fieldward, 'tis time to
start the plows!
To set the furrows rolling while all the
old crows nod,
And deep as life, the kernel, to cut the
golden sod!
The pen, let nations have it—we'll plow
awhile for God.
When half the things that must be done
are greater than our art,
And half the things that must be done are
smaller than our heart,
And poorest gifts are dear to burn on
altars unrevealed,
Like music comes the summons, the challenge from the world—
"They tread the immortal measure who
make a mellow field!"

There is also evidence of the fine endowment of the singer in many of the other poems. Mrs. Dargan's appreciation of beauty is manifested in "Lute and Furrow" as in her various other creations. There may be dissent by many from the laudatory lines to John Reed, the radical, whose tumultuous life came to a close in Russia in days of turmoil. But as a rule Mrs. Dargan's philosophy and code run true.



GILBERT FRANKAU, AUTHOR OF — "THE LOVE STORY OF ALIETTE BRUNTON"

OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN, AUTHOR OF — "LUTE AND FURROW"

From
NEWS
Chicago, Ill.

AUG 23 1922

Lyrical Beauty.

LUTE AND FURROW. By Olive Tilford Dargan. Scribner's.

A BOOK of striking contrasts, as its name implies. Here are lyrics of careful technique, and many of them with true singing rhythms, and here are also rugged genre pictures of life and character in the southern mountains where the writer spends much of her life. To me she strikes a finer note in these than in the first type. There is fresher emotion in them, and they are valuable historically, for they are sketches of a people who are changing fast.

A poem such as "Release" flashes an unforgettable and indubitably true glimpse into the life of a poor mountain woman in the south, but a delicate bit like "The Almshouse Garden" is just as true, and charms by the very paucity of the means employed.

Mrs. Dargan's many admirers will welcome her in the songs of Luthany, of blue warm skies and waxen jasmine, sung to pensive intro-and-retro-spective melodies, but the Mrs. Dargan who sings of the furrow whose unproductive soil is still fertile enough to nourish noble souls will win to herself newer, and possibly younger, friends.

ANCHUSA.

SPEAKING OF BOOKS

SIDNEY L. McGEE

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green & Co. New York. 1932 432pp. $2.50.

(Reviewed by Miss Winifred G. Crowell)

(Editor's Note. I wish to call the particular attention of the readers of this column to this review by Miss Crowell, of a book by one whom she calls her "most intimate and deeply prized friend." Fielding Burke is a pseudonym for Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, a Southern writer already famous as a dramatist and poet. For her Sonnet Cycle, "The Cycle's Rim," she was awarded the New York prize for the best volume of Southern poetry in 1915. She makes her home in Asheville, N. C., and gives much of her energy to social work among the tenants on a large farm she owns in the North Carolina mountains. Mrs. Dargan was a co-student at Radcliffe with Miss Crowell, and later was a school-mate of Miss Alice Napier at Peabody College.

S. L. M.)

Various phases of American life have been pictured in recent fiction and drama. The comments of eminent critics on CALL HOME THE HEART give this unusual study of the North Carolina mountain folk its due place among such literature. "It is the noblest book by an American this year. It is of the type of THE GOOD EARTH, no more to be hurried than a sunrise." "It has everything we like in a novel of our time."

The story centers around Ishma Waycaster, whose father, generous and debonair, was an incapable farmer; whose mother had fulfilled the early prophecy that "when Laviny wizens up, there'll not be much left of her, but her tongue." From her father, a "roamin' feller," Ishma inherits her "correct nose," large mouth tenderly curved and marked with an aloof humor, and her straight figure, built for strength." From a rare Granny is come the broad forehead and delicate eyebrows; Granny's eyes of twilight gray which "always kept faith with solitude and deep woods," have also come to Ishma, in whom "with all their level beauty they guarded reserves unknown to herself."

From early childhoood Ishma is the wage-earner and support of a shiftless family, of a whining sister, with a lazy husband and an increasing brood of unhealthy children:—"nine to eat from one meal barrel, and only Ishama to fill it." But "at eighteen she is tall and strong with no droop of the shoulders to hint of the burden she carries."

There are two lovers. Britt Hemsley is the son of a preacher who "rode about the settlements and knew a thing a two." His mother, a teacher with a "C" certificate, died at his birth. Following the varying vicissitudes of the "ridin' preacher," Britt has reached manhood with "nothin but a guitar" and a winning charm of manner and spirit. Ishma marries Britt, and struggles patiently and cheerfully to win her freedom from the shackles of her selfish family; but finally discouraged and in despair by the defeat of every effort, she leaves her husband and young son and follows her second lover, Rad Bailey, down the mountain to the mill town.

Here again, though cherished and protected by Rad Bailey, Ishma finds new burdens for her willing shoulders among the poverty and sickness of the mill-workers' families. Though the death of her child, through the friendship of the wealthy mill-owner's wife, through Derry Unthank, the

Five pages ahead

Times Dispatch
Richmond, Va.

RICHM

DIFFICU

Ranks High as a Poet.

LUTE AND FURROW. By Olive Tilford Dargan. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

Nothing is more notable in present American literature than the poetic contributions of women—both in free verse and in the more conventional forms. They have brought a freshness into our literature that is, perhaps, wanting in our prose. Of the half dozen or more notable women poets, Olive Tilford Dargan is high in rank. From the first she has shown unusual power, and her latest contribution is an advance on her former work.

Mrs. Dargan is a Kentuckian by birth and a North Carolinian by adoption. Her home is at Almond, N. C., and in this beautiful mountain country she has found an inspiring environment. In 1914 she published her first book, "Semiramis and Other Plays," a volume that was warmly welcomed and that brought the author recognition in literary circles. It was felt that a poet of great promise had appeared.

Mrs. Dargan has recently sent forth her fifth volume, "Lute and Furrow," which takes its name from the first poem, the keynote to the book. First there comes the call of poesy, of the lute; and then, in quaint mountain speech, intermingled with rich lines, the homely summons of the plow in the furrow. One throbs with the appeal of the lute, but rejoices in the triumphant paean of the plow:

The pen, let nations have it—we'll
plow awhile for God.

And again:

Like music comes the summons, the
challenge from the weald—
"They tread immortal measure who
make a mellow field!"

The theme of the furrow runs through the book. The mountain folk, whom Mrs. Dargan knows so well, are pictured in lines of beauty that touch the heart with the understanding of homely lives bravely lived. The author has a gift for narrative rare in modern poetry, coupled with great lyrical power. The reader feels this in reading "Evvie's Mother," which voices the fatalistic belief that "it will work out"; in "Released," a Deborah singing that there will be no more children; and in other poems that vibrate with emotion.

"Francesca," with its inconsolable lament over the death of Beauty, is an elegy of rare charm. It is, perhaps, the most unique of Mrs. Dargan's poems. The concluding stanza wonderfully expresses the poignancy of mortal loveliness:

But she was Beauty; planets swing,
And ages toil, that one like her
May make dust sing;
And I, who held her hand, must go
Alone and know.

Mrs. Dargan is as much at home in the realm of tender fancy as in describing the mountain folk among whom she lives. There are bits that make one fair catch one's breath. Take this:

And here on moss like heather,
As fragrant and as deep,
Safe in the tender weather,
The baby angels sleep.

They curl and tumble near me,
Like little laughing flames;
They nudge and do not fear me,
And whisper me their names.

Here and there is an exquisite thought, as the following:

The mountains lie in curves so tender
I want to lay my arms about them
As God does.

In this volume of good things, almost every page has its appeal, but perhaps the poem called "A Song" has the rarest beauty:

The bird upon the ocean waste
With straining wing,
Fails not, for in her breast
She bears an unbuilt nest,
A bough of spring.

And I who travel toward a west
That has no sun,
Faint not, for in my breast
Thy love is still my rest
And harbor won.

Mrs. Dargan's power of description is also compelling. Mountain scenery has seldom been more realistically presented than in "I Take a Walk." The note of mysticism is in "The Sea Asks." In fact, in "Lute and Furrow," Mrs. Dargan touches her instrument to almost all the forms of song, and in all she excels. The volume will take a high place in contemporary American verse.

standing of social conditions makes his portrayal a moving picture.—S. W.

ALABAMA

THE

PATH FLOWER
AND OTHER VERSES
By OLIVE T. DARGAN

WILLIAM ARCHER:

"I have read the poems with much admiration. They are full of fine imagination and delicate, sensitive expression. Many of them appeal to me very much. Indeed, I may say that wherever I understand I admire. . . . I shall not attempt to pick out the pieces that I specially like—it would take too long. The first that occur to me are 'Ballad,' 'Sorolla,' and 'To Sleep'; but I could name many others."

EDWARD H. CLEMENT, *Transcript:*

"The poems are exquisite as pieces of art, and they are rich with heart's blood, warm with sympathy, fiery with purpose all through."

PATH FLOWER and Other Verses

RICHARD WHITEING:

"I have read the poems with immense interest. My favorites are, I think, the 'Hermit Thrush,' 'Thanksgiving,' 'Latter Days,' 'To Moina,' 'In the Blue Ridge,' and 'Little Daughters,' not to omit 'A Dirge' and 'His Argument' for simplicity, clearness, and sweet Shakespearian ring."

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES, *Church of the Messiah, New York:*

"No more serious work is being done to-day by any writer than that which is to be found in Olive Dargan's dramas, and no work more worthy of respect. Profound in thought, concise and vivid in expression, mounting now and then to rapturous heights, and moving always with splendid sweep and power, she is a poet of the poets, if not of the people."

Have YOU missed reading this fine novel of the South?

*All over the Southland delighted readers are discovering it!**

NORTH CAROLINA

I do not think one line of the book escaped me. It was clear and direct, sincere and honest, intelligent and wise and true from beginning to end.—W. T. C.

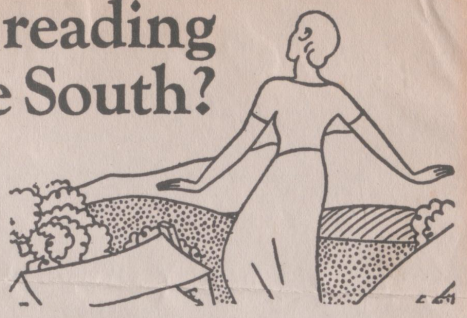
GEORGIA

The life of the mountain folk could not, it seems to me, be more powerfully or more beautifully pictured. Indeed the book has everything a great book should have. I hoped it would get the Pulitzer Prize.—W. C.

VIRGINIA

Written with rare beauty, power and sympathy. I do not know mountain people well, but I do know about mill people. Fielding Burke's deep understanding of social conditions makes his portrayal a moving picture.—S. W.

ALABAMA



CALL

Has everything we like to find in a novel of our time.—*Laurence Stallings.*

HOME

One of the most satisfying love stories I have ever read.—*Harry Hansen.*

THE

from page 174

be read in the clearest terms and to match which one must go to the anthologies. Equal praise is due the dramatic quality of the work, and this indeed may be said of Mrs. Dargan's work in general. The poetic drama is distinctly her province. She has as much native faculty for characterization and construction as for image and diction.

This is especially marked in the comedy of the present volume, "A Son of Hermes," in which the reader is fairly tantalized by the perplexities of the nevertheless perfect plot, and which is a masterly exhibition of the potentialities a poet can divine in the perverse personality of Alcibiades—disguised with discreet poetic license here as "Biades." In "Kidmir," the final play, we are in the realm of pure tragedy—tragedy of the fundamental and fatal, rather than realistic, romantic or otherwise conventional order. And to lovers of pure literature, devotees of poetry pure and simple, this remarkable story of elemental passion in bitter conflict with the loftiest ideality will doubtless seem the true *pièce de rêsistance* of the book. Taken together, the three dramas admirably confirm Mrs. Dargan's laureateship in her very distinguished domain.

Bill McGirt
Box 135, Winston-Salem
24th August, 1952

Dear Olive Dargam -

I have just finished reading "A stone Came Rolling" I want to sing a Job's cry of defiance, and Isaiah's vision of a new earth. The poetry of the land and the people, the fury of our oppression, and the certainty of our soon victory. -- I hear you worry sometimes, but please don't let them do that to you, who so exquisitely and powerfully lived a life of "witness for every footstep om that road."

Believe me, my friend (and I know as a friend as I know Beethoven) I have read many of the recent first novels, and am am thrilled by their seeing of the ordinary yhings - the cosa, the fish and oil, and earth and rivers and mountains - as part of a new and living vision . but then to see one's beloved native land through the passionate and all-seing eyes of the new vision - it is revelation that puts me in an ecstacy I am not ashamed of because it roots me powerfully to this dirt, to this every day necessity and all its eternal continuity and creative unity.

Your book dug down deep into my experience and consciousness and cast it so powerfully inthe new light, that I hope I can never, never lose this fire or the heart-force of that sacrifice for, ~~fire~~, or the lip-closeness of, the beautiful world to be - that is in our hands to build. A creation like Ishma is so much and overwhelming force, and integral conception, yet so close and so convincingly true to what we remember we have implicit in us --that I feel as if I had been bathed and recast.

The book is much stronger on the negro question, ex excellent on the unity method, penetrates the owners, the bosses, the preachers, the scabs and sell-outs and all their scavenging tribe with devastation, and reveals that the revolutionary struggles in the Bible can be turned to new turbines instead of old whips.

Did you ever know a Derry Unthank? Such a man I would like to have known.

I hope I can see you some day. It is people like Dr. DuBois and yourself who make me recognise how deeply all eternity can be embraced and experienced in these short years of our lives. There is no need to drop us out individually forever. One touch with the continuous flow of the human struggle - and all history flows through us with our saying with Martin, "We were fifteen thousand strong!" -and as many more, so very many more.

Thank you again for your inspiration in helping me to overcome my male supremacist attitudes in experiencing confidence in my fellow-workers in this State!

Fraternally,
Bill McG.

MRS. DARGAN'S NEW VOLUME OF PLAYS

THE MORTAL GODS AND OTHER DRAMAS*

A NEW volume illustrative of Mrs. Dargan's talent is a genuine literary event. She holds a unique position among her compatriots, not to say among her contemporaries, both as a poet and as a dramatist. But "The Mortal Gods," the first play of this new volume, is additionally noteworthy, for its motive as well as for its distinguished poetic and dramatic treatment. This might almost be concisely called "social justice," and from this point of view it would not be fanciful to consider it as a document of the current presidential campaign—of course of a particularly sublimated character, but nevertheless particularly applicable to the actual situation, real or imagined, as different partisans look at it. Mrs. Dargan's readers will recall "The Shepherd"—the prose play of her preceding volume. That dealt with the cause of the oppressed in Russia, but so powerfully and with such intensity as to make it clear that the author's humanitarian was as genuine as her æsthetic inspiration. It is accordingly no surprise to find her in "The Mortal Gods" bringing the same passionate ardor and *sæva indignatio* to the dramatic presentation of injustice in general as exemplified in the persecution of poverty by wealth.

The presentation is, it need hardly be said, highly imaginative; we are in fairyland and the characters and action of the play are eminently romantic. "The play," in itself and as a play, is thoroughly "the thing;" its interest of plot and passion is marked. But in its entire structure as well as its tissue the reader will find its eloquent allegory unescapable and its moral pointed with unrelenting sharpness. Assuming the existence among us of a crisis caused by "predatory wealth" on the one hand and the peonage of poverty on the other, as indubitable as that due to political tyranny in Russia, we have in "The Mortal Gods" an American analogue of "The Shepherd." A few years ago this would have seemed a highly romantic assumption, but a great deal of water has flowed under the bridges since then, and manifestly Mrs. Dargan has been carried on the top wave of the current with at least the notable result of this drama. It might pertinently be added to Progressive campaign literature to which, being *literature*, it would be also a piquant addition.

For severe as Mrs. Dargan is on those who grind the faces of the poor, and impassioned as is her muse in the service of the great cause of social and industrial justice, the muse is her inseparable companion. The polemical spirit edges rather than dulls her poetic ardor. There is not a line that is not *felt* as expressive, instead of being merely consecrated to the cause. The play contains many passages of the purest poetry—notably the love passages, wherein Mrs. Dargan's poetic title is to

* THE MORTAL GODS AND OTHER DRAMAS. By Olive Tilford Dargan. $1.50 *net;* postpaid $1.65.



Bluebonnet Lodge, Asheville

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Sketch by H. Young Taylor

Birthday Greetings!



— And best wishes
for continued success
Sincerely,
Young

Ishma is the sort of woman that men love at once and forever.

Chicago Tribune.

Unless we are mistaken, this will prove one of the great books of this and many other seasons. It goes into the heart of things . . . and about it is a finality that leaves the reader breathless.

Democrat Chronicle, Rochester, N. Y.

Every mark of experience and craftsmanship is evident in this story. It is full of a great understanding of nature and humanity. Whether it is read for pure pleasure or as a social study, "Call Home the Heart" is a remarkably good book.

Gazette, Montreal Canada.

Here is tenderness and depth in character dilineation, masterly technique in marshalling incidents, and fervor in presenting them. A most unusual first novel.

Los Angeles Times.

Impressive and beautiful.

Dallas News.

The mountain chapters are full of intense life, all the more intense because it is life at once singing and aching.

Lewis Gannett.

All I know of Fielding Burke at the present moment is that he is a first-rate novelist. His importance is obvious. We shall know much more later.

James Gray, *St. Paul Dispatch.*

Ishma is a big person. The book is hers, and she brings to it a freshness, breadth and power that place it far above the ordinary run.

Philadelphia Inquirer.

It is much more than a novel-with-a-purpose. It is poetic and beautiful.

Literary Lantern.

The noblest novel written by an American this year.

May Lamberton Becker, in Reader's Guide,
Saturday Review of Literature.

A novel of North Carolina that stands full sized and mature among many well written but slighter books about the mountain folk. It is tragic, it is humorous, it is a document in American economic history, and it is a story of an unusual yet thoroughly human character . . . Better than satisfaction is the admiration and thought that it stimulates.

Chrisian Science Monitor, Boston.

It has the ingredients of a really great and enduring novel, all the power that a good artist draws from knowing his locale down to the last twig, and the breadth from a richly sympathetic spirit working on vital material. Most other pictures of Southern mountain life dwindle into mere picturesqueness beside the obvious reality—humorous and beautiful as well as grim—of this one. These people have assumed in the last few years a significance which overshadows their idiosyncrasies. Mr. Burke has done bravely to recognize it and to give it the exciting treatment it deserves.

Herald-Tribune, New York City.

LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.
55 Fifth Avenue
New York
$2.50 AT ALL BOOK STORES

Retail Bookseller

Longmans, Green are enthusiastic about Fielding Burke's new novel of Western lead miners, "Sons of the Stranger." Four portraits of the novel's central characters, drawn by Alan Haemer, will be featured in a twelve page pamphlet being prepared, which will include data on the book and the author. There will be a jacket by Haberstock, and large scale advertising.

EVENING POST
NEW YORK CITY
FEB 19 1932

Reading and Writing

By William Soskin

IN Fielding Burke's novel, "Call Hom
the Heart" (Longmans), there
a lesson for the literary proletarian
the Communists, Syndicalists an
Marxists who are planning to captu
American literature and "bore fro
within." Mr. Burke has taken a them
dear to the hearts of these class
conflict boys—the industrial war in th
textile industry of the South—and h
has shown them that authentic fictio
grows and is nourished by human lif
by fundamental understanding of cha
acter and of the deep-rooted ethnic
traits of a people. It cannot be achieve
in any important sense by applying
proletarian formula to a scene an
writing a propaganda novel, as Mar
Heaton Vorse did, for example, whe
she wrote "Strike."

I see by the papers that a "move
ment" has started among American
writers to go radical. If that is true i
is not very important. Esthetes and
artists can't go radical at will, just be
cause they are bored with the previous
careers, or because the market seems to
need a new mood, or because they'd
like to slum among the workers. And
if these volunteers in the Communist
ranks read "Call Home the Heart" I
think they will realize the ridiculous
ness of their performance.

Mr. Burke's story has much of the
substance of a propaganda novel—his
study of the mill town in North Caro
lina and of the strike in Gastonia is
committed to emotional sympathy and
prejudice for the workers, his poor
people are heroes and his rich people
are villains, his liberals and his Com
munist leaders are sentimentally drawn
—but all this fades into unimportance
beside the fact that he has written a
moving story of tremendously real and
breathing people. Almost half the book
is devoted to a picture of North Caro
lina mountain life, and there is no
trace of the proletarian issue Mr. Burke
later develops in this delineation of the
farm life, the daily routine, the com
mon beauty, the folk ways, the rich
vernacular and the essential spirit of
his mountain people. From this scene
and from the home of her husband
Ismalee Waycaster, the heroine, flees to
the arms of the man she loves.

She comes to the town of Winbury
(which is Gastonia), and there, in con
trast to the rural vitality and the
comparative realness of the mountain
life, she finds human cheapness. Mr.
Burke's account of the cruelty of the
industrial system which creates that
cheapness, of the dark, meaningless
fate of its victims, is never abstract. He
remains a novelist. His people are
bound to grip the reader's emotional
attention, and in that he transcends
the journalist who makes a class con
flict the pretext for a novel. "Call
Home the Heart" is definitely an im
portant book, probably the most com
petent of modern American stories of
the industrial frontiers.

CALL HOME THE HEART

BY

FIELDING BURKE

«»

A story of compelling reality.
New York Times.

A social epic.
Public Ledger, Philadelphia.

Continues to be our best bet among the love stories of the year.
World-Telegram, New York.

The reader will not spend a dull moment.
Atlanta Constitution.

Perhaps the best novel yet written of the industrial conflict in contemporary America. And how long we have needed it!
Jonathan Daniels, *Saturday Review of Literature,* New York.

Clear and vital. We need writers like this.
Maristan Chapman.

Fine! This is what I have long wanted to see done for the South.
Addison Hibbard.

It has everything we like to find in a novel of our time.
Laurence Stallings, *New York Sun.*

One of the most satisfying love stories I have read.
Harry Hansen, *Harper's Magazine.*

Has the mood and the emotional reach, if not quite the simplicity, as the Time of Man.
Evening Post, Chicago.

The same sort of epic power one finds in Rolvaag's Giants in the Earth.
Providence Journal.

the night of her return - these are incidents that can not fail to capture the imagination and stir the senses.

Halifax Daily Courier
and Guardian

.....The actual origin of thr people of the Carolina mountains may be this or that, but spiritually they come from Lancashire. Britt, Ishma's husband, is simply a Carolina gormless lad of ours, and pride was in us when we read the epic dscription of the preacher who excommunicated her for desertion; alsO when Mr. Burke, subscribing to the theory that what's wrong with the poor is poverty, found capital for Britt by taking him to New York to make records of ballads and when Britt declined stage offers and returned to his plough, we called him cousin Ishma's story, put crudely, is that of a country girl who dreams of cities, goes to one, and finds disillusionment; but she is

a fighting dreamer, and the detail even of
ntain pastoral of the early part of
k is plotfully invented to define a
character against a background of
in landscape and feckless tenacity
ly. This is a considerable novel.

The Manchester Guardian

BATTS—75c
ngle sheet quilt size,
batt—75c.

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DR. KENNETH MAYO
CHILDREN'S DENTIST
Russell Brown Bldg. 3104 Main St.
Houston, Texas

HOWEVER, the scope of these few ar
cles will only admit of discussion
things more immediate to the infant's we
fare. Hence we will consider prenatal ca
By prenatal care one means to embra
attention to those conditions and influenc
in the expectant mother, during the term
pregnancy, that will in any way affect t
life and health of her unborn child.
As soon as conception is definitely
tablished a competent physician should

chome stomach disorders, constipation, u
dernourishment, and anemia in our you
boys and girls is producing a generatio
though not in the usual sense of the wo
diseased, that is unfit for the propagati
and nourishing of the next.


Tilford Bridge

I was not the cyclyst here.
onto this little bridge, in
down and began a poem that h
village I had discovered the
Fairingdown." Thanks to the
flowed to a finish as easily

Surrey, Eng. 1912

A MOUNTAIN STORY

CALL HOME THE HEART, by *Fielding Burke* (Longmans, 7s. 6d.). If you can read a very long novel and like stories about poor mountain folk in remote parts of America, this should appeal to you. But even if you prefer shorter tales and don't really care for the mountain people you might still find parts of this book absolutely absorbing. It is a strange mixture of passionate love story, rather crude socialism, and natural philosophy, but the author can write and knows life in farm and factory to the very quick.

Loose Item(s)

God's Gift

By LANDIS TILFORD

God gave us Life
And faith in it,
And hope for it,
And love toward it,
And wonderment that in one breath
He takes it all away and gives us
Death.

This short, searching bit of verse is taken from the spring edition of The Babylonian. Its author is a member of the Tilford family of Nacogdoches, widely known for its literary achievements. Tilden Tilford is the author of "Butternut Jones," a novel which has been adopted by the state for supplementary reading, and Mrs. Tilford Dargan is one of the foremost poets of the country.

Loose Item(s)

O. T - Dargan

Tel. Chelsea 8860

OLD RELIABLE

Henry Romeike

PRESS CLIPPINGS

106 SEVENTH AVE., N. Y.

BE SURE ITS HENRY

(Other Romeikes May Disappoint)

THIS CLIPPING FROM THE

LOS ANGELES

CALIF.

TIMES

AUG 6 1922

Charles Scribner's Sons recently published George Santayana's "Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies;" a new volume of poems by Olive Tilford Dargan, called "Lute and Furrow;" "Signs of Sanity," by Stewart Paton, lecturer on neuro-biology at Princeton University and on psychiatry at Columbia University; "The Direction of Human Evolution" by Prof. Edwin Grant Conklin, first published in 1921, and now reissued with a new preface by the author; and a volume of sixteen modern one-act plays, selected and edited by B. Roland Lewis, head of the Department of English of the University of Utah.

Loose Item(s)

a fighting dreamer, and the detail even of the mountain pastoral of the early part of the book is plotfully invented to define a stalwart character against a background of loveliness in landscape and feckless tenacity in her family. This is a considerable novel.

The Manchester Guardian

I was not the cyclyst here. When alone and afoot I wandered unexpectedly onto this little bridge, in a setting more lovely than pictured, I sat down and began a poem that had been singing in my head about the little village I had discovered the day before, between sunset and dark - "Old Fairingdown." Thanks to the bridge and the beauty around it, the poem flowed to a finish as easily as the whispering stream to the sea.

Surrey, Eng. 1913



A long novel - and a great one - is Fielding Burke's "Call Home the Heart." It is not perfect, but that is because it is human. Occasional purple patches, and acres of detail, but never for one moment dull. Mr. Burke can make you as passionately interested in a crop of soya beans or a haystack on fire as in the attempted lynching of a Negro or Britt's flaming fight with the preacher after Ishma's excommunication. I put "Call Home the Heart" aside reluctantly, because other books screamed for attention. But you will want to read it again.

Roger Pippit, in Daily Herald,
London

Powerful Story-telling.

Everyman

There is dignity and beauty about this novel of American farm life in the Carolina mountains, which is a rare thing to encounter in modern fiction.

Eastern Daily Press

(ENGLAND)

.....It says much for Mr. Burke's sympathy and skill that he has been able to overcome my ~~prejudice~~ prejudice against this kind of a novel and this kind of a heroine; usually they give me the Appalachian blues. Ishma is a big, strong, courageous, wilful woman, made for dialect and tragedy..... I do not know whether this is Mr. Burke's first novel; in any case, it is a remarkable performance.

Gerald Gould,
The Observer

...A grim story of a harsh manner of life, but the development of the plot is vigorous and full of interest. ....Ishma's midnight fight to save their soya beans from straying cattle, her husband's fight at the chapel door with the preacher who condemns her publicly after her flight to the town, the textile strike in which she takes such an active part, and the forest fire which occurs on

England

SALES MANAGER'S PAGE

WE ANNOUNCE THE PUBLICATION OF

Call Home the Heart

By FIELDING BURKE

IN SEPTEMBER

Large crown 8vo. 440 pages 7s. 6d. net

Reader's Report: I think it is definitely good. It is genuinely moving, holds real tragedy, and sentiment never gives place to sentimentality.

2nd Reader's Report: The author has the power of creating real people, not only in the sense of their being three-dimensional, but of their being alive, vital and worth creating. This is an extraordinarily fine piece of work.

The Sales Manager's Secretary: I think it's wonderful. I keep forgetting that Ishma is only a character in a story; I feel I know her like a friend.

The Sales Manager: I do not merely praise this novel; I have put my own name on the subscription list, because I know it is a book I shall want to have on my shelves to read again and to dip into for well-remembered passages.

(From England: excerpts from ~~reviews~~ reviews
of CALL HOME THE HEART: first novel)

A live and fascinating document. This is the sort of ~~xxxxxx~~ long novel, conscientiously written amd painstakingly consistent in quality, that makes the British reader a little ashamed of the scamped work which mars so many of our native products; the American novelist at least makes it his duty to know the detail and technique of ~~the~~ life he describes. Mr. Arnold Bennett would have delighted in such a work as "Call Home the Heart."

Glasgow Herald

A story finely and tenderly human. Taken with leisurely reading it has its own truth and beauty.

Literary Supplement, Times,
London

The life Ishma lives is life almost unbearably hard at times, but full, vivid lived to the utmost stretch of the faculties, real, and dealing with real things...gives a sense of wide horizons, and that not in the physical sense alone.

John o' London's Weekly

Here is a fresh handling of a familiar illustration:

"They know 'tis death—they know 'tis death.
And what
Is that? We are all guests in God's great house,
The Universe, and Death is but his page
To show us to the chamber where we sleep.
What though the bed be dust, to wake is sure;
Not birds but angels flutter at the eaves
And call us, singing."

Mrs. Dargan has evidently read her Shakespeare wisely and well, and her work bears testimony to the inspiring influence of a companionship which stimulates and invigorates rather than subdues and masters. Occasionally the Shakespearean manner is caught and curiously combined with a distinctly feminine note:

"But there's a world not this,
O'er-roofed and fretted by ambition's arch,
Whose sun is power and whose rains are blood,
Whose iris bow is *the small golden hoop*
That rims the forehead of a king."

The two parts of "Lords and Lovers" form a contribution to dramatic literature of real importance. They are not without faults of construction and infelicities of diction. Mrs. Dargan, it must be remembered, is still a young writer, and her work has the opulence of imagery and diction and the occasional awkwardness of youth. Her touch is at times as firm and decisive as that of a master; at other times it is uncertain and amateurish. One finds in these plays such pure poetry as this:

"For I love to say
Good-by to my dear stars; they seem so wan
And loath to go away, as though they know
The fickle world is thinking of the sun,
And all their gentle service of the night
Is quite forgot;"

such strength and dignity of expression as this:

"I'll not fear to dare
The darkest shadow of defeat that broods
O'er scepters and unfriended kings;"

and such fallings away from grace of diction and dignity of speech as these:

"Who can keep mum when death
Turns the last screw?
. . . . . .
I've but that youth,
Brief youth that held its morning roses up
And fled, and this bare, aged now that drops
But aching moments till I've found my son."

It seems ungracious to point out defects of taste, infelicities of diction, affectations of style, when so much beauty of a fresh and noble kind is poured out as from a full mind; but Mrs. Dargan has created her own standards and is her own judge when she falls short of the final touch of energy and charm.

Hamilton Wright Mabie

Comment on Current Books

The American Ten Years' War

This, as its title would lead one to suspect, is another contribution to the already voluminous literature dealing with the Civil War. But it is a distinctly original contribution—is, in fact, unlike any other account of the struggle we have yet read. It represents, to put the matter briefly, an attempt to narrate the varying phases of the conflict in the form of a prose epic. "A new Ten Years' War we witness on our Western Continent," explains the author, "not altogether unlike the far-famed Trojan one ending in the destruction of Ilium and the restoration of Helen. Again every community will muster its contingent of soldiers and send them forth to the war under its leading man or hero, to fight for the great cause, which meant in the olden time that Hellas and not Troy was to determine the civilization of the future. But now a restoration is to take place far deeper than the Grecian or that of Helen; the mighty struggle is not now for the ideal of beauty, but for the ideal of freedom." From this lofty view-point, then, and in the language of sublimity, would Mr. Snider unfold the drama, dating its beginning, not from the firing on Fort Sumter, but from the first invasion of Kansas by the Missourians in 1855. Opinions will differ as to the success attending his effort. For ourselves, despite the obvious fact that his insight and imagination far outstrip his artistic power, and despite the singular circumstance that he bestows the scantiest attention on the campaigns and battles that vindicated the ideal of which he sings, we strongly incline to the belief that his book could be read to advantage by all who would approach more detailed, if more prosaic, studies of the conflict with an appreciation of the significance underlying its external aspects. It is

9 February

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Virginia Quarterly

A Novel We Are Proud to Publish

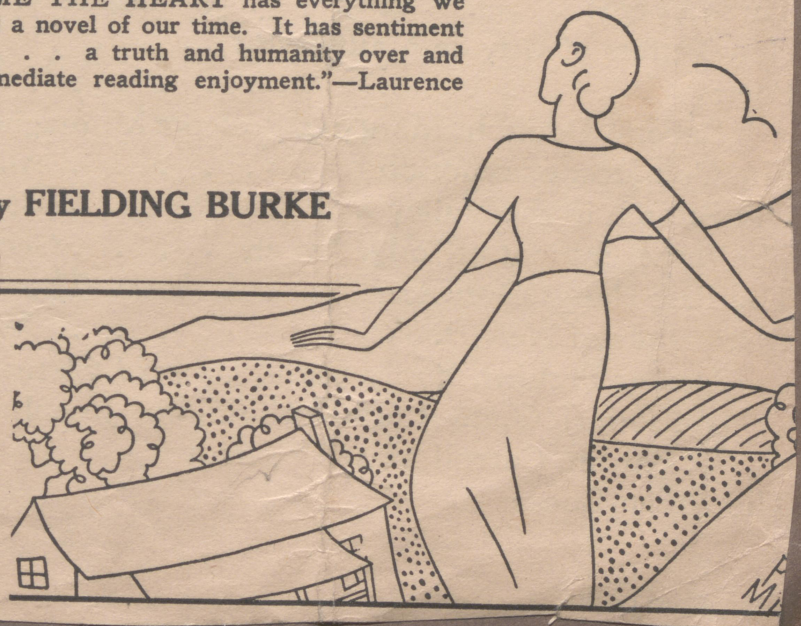
CALL HOME THE HEART

FEET to walk with . . . hands to work with . . . all the mountain folk had those. But Ishma had more, and in abundance—a heart rich in compassion, a mind restless with energy—dreams that held pity for all the world. ¶ No novel of the South could come nearer the heart of a changing people and their problems than this memorable story of the Carolina mountains and mills.

"Unless we are facing a very happy year in literature there will be few books written in 1932 in so rich a spirit or about so moving a theme as CALL HOME THE HEART."—Jonathan Daniels.

"CALL HOME THE HEART has everything we like to find in a novel of our time. It has sentiment and feeling . . . a truth and humanity over and above its immediate reading enjoyment."—Laurence Stallings.

By FIELDING BURKE



$2.50

LONGMANS, GREEN & COMPANY

55 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

....No more noteworthy contribution has been made in recent years to the highest type of drama. The verse is full of music and imagery, and to bring these poetic plays into prose contrast with such a play as "The Shepherd" bespeaks amazing versatility. The theme of this last, that the world is to be saved by peace and not by the sword, is perhaps the noblest and most elevated of them all.

The News, Chicago

(Belongs with page 10)

Star
Auckland, N.Z.
3 DEC 1932
315

"CALL HOME THE HEART."

A NOTABLE NOVEL.

"Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke, a very attractive and compelling title, has a lovable heroine. She is one of those little wood-nymphish people whom we love to read about and heartily admire. The setting of the book is a lonely mountain farm in America, and when Ishmalee is not struggling bravely to bring order into an unbelievably poverty-stricken household, she runs wild among the trees and draws from them serenity of mind and peace. People who talk to trees can be rather tiresome, but somehow one does not mind whatever Ishmalee does; it is the way she does it that charms. In her struggle to seek a real meaning to life she undergoes many harrowing experiences; not even marriage with the person who is obviously the only suitable one for such a sensitive plant as Ishmalee, is enough. In seeking something elusive she nearly throws away her only permanent happiness, but the mountains call her heart home and when she returns she is happy in a closer understanding with her husband (who, by the way, is a rare man and faithful to a point of almost unbelief) and a new-born joy in the great outdoors. The life of the family at the farm is exceedingly well done. Except for a different phraseology and backblock American dialect, the story might be of any British farm to which we are more accustomed. Longmans, Green and Co. are the publishers.

40

the Younger. The three poetic plays are constructed along well-established lines and show the influence of the older dramas; the prose play is not untouched by the spirit of contemporary play-writing. Mrs. Dargan is in no sense an imitator, and her work is in no sense an echo of other and familiar things said long ago; but she has traveled along the great highway rather than taken the by-paths which have tempted and claimed so many contemporary dramatists. Her view of life, in a word, is that of Shakespeare rather than that of Ibsen or Sudermann. It has breadth, balance, the relief of humor. It is a broad and generous outlook and interpretation rather than a lime-light revelation and protest. The recent journalistic exploits in this direction are really local and specialized applications illustrative of that use of the muck-rake over the whole surface of human life which has given the later dramatic literature of the Continent its vividness, intensity, and repulsiveness. It is a great relief to get back to the highway after so many and such prolonged visitations to madhouses, hospitals, and sewers. There are ruffians on the highway; there are deeds of violence and scenes of shame; but there are also the serenity of the sky to touch mean things with poetry, and the breath of the fields to counteract evil odors; and there are generous and noble souls, who have affections rather than lusts, and who are free and spontaneous without becoming lawbreakers and scoundrels. In view of what Mrs. Dargan has achieved and of her great promise, her sanity is of immense importance to her art and to the permanence and representative value of her work.

She has, largely as a result of her breadth of view, that kind of Shakespearean catholicity which makes room not only for all sorts and conditions of men but for sentiment and humor as well as for tragedy. Her plays are peopled by men and women of the sort that make up the world—the mean, the vicious, the cruel, and the generous, the clean, the loyal, the merciful. There is, therefore, in these plays the variety and contrast that give a drama not only richness and range, but the vividness of effective shading and modulation of tone. The plays are unmistakably the work of a woman, which is only saying that they reveal individuality and the special quality of temperament. This is notably clear and captivating in passages of pure sentiment:

"It was not you, my heart. But say it were,
Should I pull down my heaven because a bird
Makes flying blot against it? 'Tis the doubts
That darkly flitting show love's constant sky
Forever radiant.

. . . . . .

Dearer than life, good-night.
I leave my prayers like candles set about you,
And as they fail think of me on my knees
Renewing them from Heaven."

The humor of the plays runs free from a fresh spring and has a clear, full flow. It is not easily quotable, because, being humor and not wit, it lies in the conception and management of episodes rather than in detachable lines. The play of speech between Orson and Eldra in the second part of "Lords and Lovers" is not only clever but full of character; and the peasant or servant talk throughout the dramas has a robust flavor which is hardly to be found in recent writings outside the pages of Mr. Hardy's novels. The freshness of imagery and of diction which give joy to a jaded reader are found on almost every page, and make it quite certain that Mrs. Dargan is first of all a poet. The vigor of her speech gives fire to such a passage as this:

"Methinks were I the king,
Or Pembroke with his power in my mouth,
Each English road should be ablaze to-night
With swift flint-striking hoofs. Now to our shore
Puffs up the wave may prove oblivion's maw,
And drink these Dover cliffs as they were sands,
Yet England sleeps, with one lone heart at watch."

The freshness of her handling of familiar emotions and similes, the poetic quality of her diction, touch many lines with something very like finality:

"Her princess feet like well the solid earth.
She is a flower that sips of sun and dew,
But feedeth most from root-cups firm in ground;
While you are made of music, love, and air,—
A being of the sky—a lover's star,
Although he be a king. The grace of heaven
About your beauty plays, and drops as soft
Upon my eyes as light from the lark's wing."

It is rare indeed that a dramatic poet writing since the days of Elizabeth has been able to impress upon readers the conviction that verse is the only possible medium through which to express the full volume of dramatic thought. Mrs. Dargan's poetry, whether in the terseness of rapid-fire colloquy, or in the sustained flood of feeling, is inevitable. Her imagery is the natural vesture of the thought; her pathos is wrought by a tender appeal to noble and primal emotions; her humor is the unstrained flavor of personalities. Whatever the final verdict may be as to her value, she must become a real factor in the development of modern poetry and the modern stage.

The Star, Washington D. C.

....Almost unqualified praise might be given to "The Shepherd." The whole drama is wrought with fervor, power and insight. ...Because of its purity and depth of conception. its inner play of complex emotion, it might well rank far above more than one notable drama of gloom and dubious morality that has Russia or Norway for its scene.

The News, Baltimore

....Mrs Dargan has done a notable thing in writing these plays. ...It would be difficult to speak of the book in terms that would not seem hyperbolical to one who has not read it.

The Post, Chicago

.....Such verse leaves no room for criticism. ....

The Dial, Chicago

"The Outlook"

A NEW DRAMATIST[1]

MRS. DARGAN'S volume of plays published last autumn will receive serious attention from all who care for the drama as a form of literature and for poetry for its own sake. It is not, however, a first book; and while Mrs. Dargan is not many years out of college, she has not come suddenly to her extraordinary power of characterization and her extraordinary freshness of imagery and diction. Many who read "Semiramis and Other Plays," which appeared two years ago, recognized her rare gifts of dramatic construction and poetic expression and were confident that her strength and charm would come into more vital unity through work and time. There are abundant signs of immaturity in the first book of plays, and only a very young writer would have attempted the dramatization of such a character and experience as Poe's; but there are also indisputable marks of original force of mind and imagination; the quality of promise which comes from strength and vitality rather than from facility and sensibility.

In the four plays—two of them connected—which make up the volume happily entitled "Lords and Lovers" there is much to give the lover of poetry that keen joy which comes from hearing a clear, rich, strongly sustained song from a new singer; the deep satisfaction of recognizing a fresh piece of that kind of work which exhilarates, vitalizes, and widens the vision; a work, in a word, of that art whose chief function is to deepen and heighten the sense of life. The first two plays center about the young Henry III.; the second is a prose drama of contemporary Russia, vivid in description and original in dénouement; the third is laid in Syracuse in the time of Dionysius

[1] *Lords and Lovers and Other Dramas.* By Olive Tilford Dargan. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

(2nd page over)

Hamilton Wright Mabie

evil odors. . . . . In the four plays which make up this volume there is much to give the lover of poetry that keen joy which comes from hearing a clear, rich, strongly sustained song from a new singer ; the deep satisfaction of recognising a fresh piece of that kind of work which exhilarates, vitalises, and widens the vision."—HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE, in *The Outlook.*

". . . . Indubitably a poet of charm and power has appeared in the person of Olive Tilford Dargan. She has a sense of dynamics that is almost masculine, coupled with dramatic imagination, the evocative power, the exposing in natural sequence the souls of her characters. . . . . There is hardly a page of her volume from which some mellow conceit, some melodic jewel, informed with the crossed-fires of a singularly opulent imagination can not be culled. . . . She moves freely within the gyves of blank verse . . . . speaking it as her mother tongue and winning our ears by the supple, picturesque and finely-fibred music she extorts from her instrument. . . . The one prose drama of the book again exhibits her versatility. She has the poet's greatest gift with his music, human sympathy, and that she can touch modern themes with delicacy and force is demonstrated by the 'Shepherd.'" — JAMES HUNEKER in *The North American Review.*

". . A modest young Southern woman, hitherto entirely unknown to fame, has published a collection of plays that have stirred veteran critics to real enthusiasm. Henry Austin Clapp, the Shakespearean lecturer says : 'Some of the lines make me catch my breath with wonder and delight.

Reading them, I am back in the Elizabethan Age, and Sir Walter, Sir Francis, the divine William and rare Ben may drop in upon me at any moment. Here is a stir, a sweep, a touch, a Something to which the awful adjective Great may be applied in truth and soberness.' John White Chadwick, Dr. William J. Rolfe, Thomas Nelson Page, Robert Underwood Johnson, are equally whole-hearted in acclaiming her work; and Edmund Clarence Stedman declares her to be 'of the royal line.'"—ALICE STONE BLACKWELL, *Editor of the Woman's Journal.*

"The plays of Olive Tilford Dargan are about as attractive reading as I have ever encountered."—Prof. CHARLES WILLIAM KENT, in the Ropes course of lectures, Indianapolis.

"These are dramas of extraordinary merit, and not unworthy of comparison with all but the greatest in English literature."—Dr. G. A. WAUCHOPE, University of South Carolina.

"It is noteworthy that Mrs. Dargan's work has been honoured with the praise of the men in this country who have devoted their lives largely to the study of Shakespeare,—men who would be quick to exposethe pretensionof feeble imitations of that supreme genius. What these critics have recognised is that the author of these dramas has not only become saturated with the English of Shakespeare, but has become inspired to fresh, original, creative work."—SAMUEL JUNE BARROWS.

"It takes but the most cursory examination of these plays to realise that a dramatist of exceptional genius dwells among us."—EDWIN WILEY, Vanderbilt University.

". . . . 'The Shepherd' pulses with life, the life of our own time. Reading it, we are swept in to a current of throbbing passion."—*The Advertiser, Boston.*

". . . . Her first play 'Lords and Lovers,' takes us to the time of Henry III., of England. No jarring note of thought or diction dispels the illusion. This is the wine of Elizabethan English, and it tingles in our veins. . . . . On turning to the 'Shepherd' we have a new revelation of her power. This play springs from a burning sympathy with the apostles of liberty and justice in Russia, and we are taken into the very heart of their struggle. Nothing could be more modern, and seldom has a play been written in which the reader is subject to more conflicting emotions."—*The Christian Register, Boston.*

". . . . Mrs. Dargan has so recently achieved fame that it may seem premature to pronounce a critical judgment on her work. It is certain, however, that it marks the high tide of dramatic poetry in this country. In the handling of the blank verse, in the witty scenes of the sub-plots, in the splendour of the phrasing, in the strong undercurrent of reflection, and above all in their spiritual uplift and noble emotion, these dramas give evidence of a remarkably gifted playwright."—*Columbia State.*

"I have read the book with surprising interest and pleasure. It is really alive, rich in poetry, quick with dramatic power. . . . All of the plays are interesting, stimulating, rewarding.

—HENRY VAN DYKE.

". . . . In all sincerity I say that I have read no dramas written within a hundred years that have so moved me."—MINOT J. SAVAGE.

". . . . I have seen nothing in the same line, from any English or American pen, for the last twenty-five years or more which seems to me at all equal to this volume."—WILLIAM J. ROLFE.

". . . . The beauty of the verse, its stately tread, sure rhythm and classic similes, the deep and natural feelings of the characters, the imagination, the grace—all move me as do the dramas of established fame."—WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

". . . . A born poet like Mrs. Dargan affirms her title at once. Poetic diction is the stuff of her perception and reflection. She sees and feels in images, in figure, in anything but propositions. And the beautiful in language as well as the true, the *fioritura* as well as the fact, seem to come synchronously into her imagination and take on a form of fusion in her vocabulary. The very warp and woof of her verse is of poetic texture."
—WILLIAM CRARY BROWNELL.

". . . . Her view of life, in a word, is that of Shakespeare rather than that of Ibsen and Sudermann. It has breadth, balance, the relief of humour. It is good to get back to the highway after so many and such prolonged visitations to madhouses, hospitals and sewers. There are ruffians on the highway; there are deeds of violence and scenes of shame; but there are also the serenity of the sky to touch mean things with poetry, and the breath of the fields to counteract

everything, this woman-poet shows marked virility in dealing with male characters. Her old soldiers use the blunt and straightforward speech of their kind, and she reserves her melody for the love passages. In short, she has what George Lewes called the 'dramatic ventriloquism.' . . . . . Coryat, the poet in 'A Modern Symposium,' says: 'There is nothing so important for the future or the present of the world as poetry,' and from this standpoint it is no exaggeration to rank Mrs. Dargan's volume as an important work."—*New Orleans Times-Democrat.*

"Her virtues are those that are needed for the regeneration of the American stage. The lightness that can not be moved to look on great and solemn things; the pessimism that hails down-right realism as the loftiest art expression; and that bestial conception which measures art by the purse-strings, must all give way to an idealism that never falters, and an art that is grounded in the greatness of the past, with which is joined a message of truth and spirituality to the present."—*Sewanee Review.*

". . . . It is a wonderful achievement; the play seems born, not made; you do not realise the author behind it."—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

". . . . Such verse bears the visible mark of the divine gift."—*The Dial, Chicago.*

". . . . Those who are uttering jeremiads over the decline of the drama should read Mrs. Dargan's book."—*The Globe, New York.*

". . . . In all these plays Mrs. Dargan has voiced the spirit of high-mindedness that marks the best thought of the present age."—*Record-Herald, Chicago.*

". . . . Here is a writer of so much more than promise as a builder of splendid verse wedded to high imaginative thought and fine dramatic movement that the keenest interest hereafter must follow all her work, and high success in the end should crown it."—*New York Herald.*

". . . . An assurance of touch, a virile command of plot and form, which constantly suggest a man's hand. . . . In the 'Shepherd' the dialogue is so natural and vital that one seems to hear it spoken. . . . All of the outraged passion of the revolutionists who see deliverance only in the sword and bomb is pitted against the far-reaching, spiritual insight of the man who knows that the constructive and not the destructive forces must work Russia's emancipation. The drama is fused in a white heat of action and held so to the end."—*New York Times.*

". . . . 'Lords and Lovers' is as readable as a good novel, and it has the added charm of workmanlike and impressive blank verse. Without being imitative, it has something of the Elizabethan manner withal, and an easy opulence of mingled tragedy and comedy that is uncommon in latter-day drama. . . . 'The Shepherd,' in prose, is a powerful presentation of contemporary Russian life, conceived with real force and imagination."—*The Nation. New York.*

Plays

by

Olive Tilford Dargan.



Lords and Lovers, Parts I. and II.—The Shepherd—The Siege. In one volume. $1.50 net.

Semiramis—Carlotta—The Poet. In one volume. $1.00 net.



Published by

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

"It is a privilege and a surprise, it was unexpected, and it is vastly agreeable to have such a book as Mrs. Dargan's 'Lords and Lovers.' Poets of considerable ability and more reputation, working in this formidable field, had left us calm. But here from the pen of a woman is something strong and fine and charming. . . . As the drama proceeds the reader will find movement and interest in every line. The dialogue has wit to commend it. The dramatic quality of the play is no less effective and admirable. . . . A good and remarkable book."—*New York Sun.*

"Here is blank verse of such sustained excellence that to find its parallel one must hark back to that rout of dramatists that helped the Warwickshire bard to 'fill the spacious times of great Elizabeth with sounds that echo still.' . . . To make a drama that shall move the reader greatly, there must be consistent action, natural and spirited dialogue, sharply outlined characterisation, and broadly conceived situations. And in none of these qualities, does it seem to us, are Mrs. Dargan's dramas lacking."—*Boston Transcript.*

"The first quality in these plays which is likely to impress the critical reader of to-day is their vitality, their *interestingness*. . . . The 'Shepherd' expresses what the world is feeling in regard to that tortured Titaness, Russia. . . . Mrs. Dargan has the unreserve and the impetus of the true artist. No mere prettiness hampers the dignity of her tale or poetic line."—*Chicago Post.*

". . . . It is curious to note that while our masculine dramatic writers tend to saccharize

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Archey D. Ball, Minister

352 State St.,
Hackensack, N. J.

June 25th, 1936

Dear Fielding Burke:

I have waited for a chance to read "Stone Came Rolling" with my eyes, head and emotions. That is rare writing, with charm of style, sharp characterization, and pull of ideas that gripped me, and when it didn't grip it delighted me.

Your revelation of defeatist religion should be gotten to every Protestant. Great power to you! This is the kind of book we need, America ~~is~~ needs. Dewy is wrong about religion coming out of the people. It can not come out until it gets in. But the injectors never got it from the New Testament, or rather the mind and spirit of Jesus.

Enthusiastically yours,

(Signed) Archey D. Ball

Copy

altogether sure that communism is the one thing nece
that religion means securing for man the finest adju
to the universe in which man lives," and I hope you t
play your worthy part in that endeavor.

(Signed) Curtis Webster, I
Harvey University

Hamilton Lake, Dirette, Mich.

(COPY)

My dear Mr. Burke:

I hope you will pardon the presumption of a revieweer who was unable, and unwilling, in the pages of the English Journal, to say all he should like to say.

I have read only three books in the past twi years which have moved me so much as Call Home The Heart - being Look Homeward Angel, The Maurizius Case, and Dr. Kerkhoven. My real purpose however is not to praise, as in the English Journal, but to offer you some criticism which may or may not be just, and which you may or may not have heard before. I believe Rad's turning to Leta perfectly plausible, , but I do not think your allowing Ishma to see to see their kiss is sufficient is a sufficient preparation for so important a change in a character (Rad) who waited four years and three babies for another man's wife (Ishma). Perhaps some more emphasized references to the limited attraction of other mountain girls, and more plain speaking about Ishma denying herself to Rad, would have done the trick.

Although you state clearly that it is "not the sea," don't you ~~kkkk~~make Isham a bit over conscience-salved by the fresh air camp idea? And again - despite our knowing that Britt may make money by recordings, are we adequately prepared for the great change - electricity and running water - which has taken plave on the farm that Britt and Ishma could not alter after four years of combined labor. I know that it was the money which made the difference, but do you sufficiently emphasize it?

That I have great expectation for your next novel I need hardly say. And although I am not

altogether sure that communism is the one thing necessary, , I too feel that religion means securing for man the finest adjustment possible to the universe in which man lives," and I hope you will continue to play your worthy part in that endeavor.

(Signed) Henry Curtis Webster, Instructor in English,
University of Michigan
Harvey

Hamilton Lake, Dirette, Mich.

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May 15, 1936

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May 15, 1936

My dear Mrs. Dargan:

At its meeting on Monday, May 11, our Board of Directors voted to invite you to serve as a member of the Spingarn Medal Award Committee for the term expiring July 1, 1939.

The enclosed leaflet gives the facts regarding the Medal.

The Board has asked me to express the hope that you will be willing to serve. The duties of the Committee are not onerous. A digest of the recommendations made is sent to members of the Committee considerably in advance of the meeting, which is usually held in New York the early part of the year, at such time as suits the convenience of the greatest number of the members.

Will you be good enough to let me know if we shall have the honor of your acceptance?

Ever sincerely,

Walter White
Secretary

Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan
Bluebonnet Lodge
Balsam Avenue
West Asheville, N. C.

WW/RR

27th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, BALTIMORE, MD., JUNE 29th - JULY 5th, 1936
ENDORSED BY THE NATIONAL INFORMATION BUREAU, 215 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
How do your Senators and Congressmen stand on the Costigan-Wagner Anti-Lynching Bill?

C. S. Monitor

All Ye People

A Stone Came Rolling, by Fielding Burke. New York: Longmans. $2.50.

THREE YEARS AGO, when Fielding Burke wrote "Call Home the Heart," that strangely stirring novel aroused much comment. Now, a sequel is published. "A Stone Came Rolling" is another tocsin calling out, in addition to a warning, a plea for love, wisdom and courage. Again Fielding Burke is intent on the ethical problem of "the righteous adjustment of self to the social whole." She writes a dramatic story of strongly characterized individuals, but the drama of their lives has a universal social import which lends a compelling force to the book.

Ishma Hensley and her husband, Britt, are again the central characters, each governed by a strong ideal: to do their share toward making the world habitable for everyone, rather than for a privileged few. Ishma is the idealist, rampant, zealous, but not fanatic. Britt is always for the peaceable way. "A Stone Came Rolling" is the story of their part in the "revolution" in Dunmow, a Carolina mill town. The uprising on the part of the workers and unemployed alike against the millowners and bosses was one of the stones "rollin' through Dixie," sending out reverberations of a coming avalanche to the hopeful ears of Ishma.

The alarums in Dunmow were typical of nationwide episodes and deserve study because of their broad implications. Communism as an idealistic theory has undoubtedly gained adherents in America, and when a woman as good and fine as Ishma devotes her life to its furtherance, it is wise to examine her side of the shield. She is definitely on the side of the masses, advocating reform because for her and her comrades a changed world would be a better one. Unlike the upper classes, they have no idols to be toppled, no customs to be uprooted, no values and standards to be castigated. A new world is ahead of them, and Ishma looks forward to what she terms the spiritual birth of the masses. She foresees it as not the beginning of chaos, but the end of it.

Fielding Burke's stirring presentation of conditions and ideals among the workers is different from the usual treatment. She is never bitter nor hysterical, in spite of the suffering and tumult she has witnessed. Her earnest plea for the working class is unusually effective, unmasking the abuses of a capitalistic system and forcing its adherents to recognize the need for reform. Communism, at the other end of the pendulum's swing, is also subject to criticism, but Miss Burke presents it only in its theoretical form. The abuses which are committed in its name, she fails to consider. Her picture is therefore only one-sided, with little constructive value, but it is undeniably cathartic. Society must do something for its millions of workers, and Miss Burke shows how the stone is already rolling; further, she affirms that the avalanche to come can only be salutary. Her book is instinct with hope.

M. W. S.

Providence RJ

JOURNAL

DEC 5 - 1935

Outstanding for her ability to combine artistic expression with ideals of the class struggle, Fielding Burke is one of the most pleasing and persuasive writers of the ever-growing group of proletarian novelists.

Her "Call Home the Heart" was greeted by critics of all connections as a significant and impressive sign that a new author of distinction had appeared on the American literary scene. Her new novel, "A Stone Came Rolling" (Longmans Green), adds to her stature as a writer for it is evidence that Olive Dargan (for that is her real name) is not a one-book author and that the success of her first effort has not swerved her from devotion to social reform.

"A Stone Came Rolling" concerns the same people with whom the reader became acquainted in Miss Dargan's first book—Ishma and Britt, Bly Emberson and his wife, Verna. The background is the southern mill town of Dunmow, and the theme, the conflict between mill workers and mill owners. To this reviewer's regret, Miss Dargan has allowed her characters to come between herself and her most effective and compelling material—the social unrest that culminates in strikes and death. Her men and women seem shadowy figures playing unreal parts when concerned with personal relationships of no social significance. But when they appear as elements in the stirring labor struggle, then they take on color and dimension and vitality. This characteristic is due, of course, to the fact that Miss Dargan writes with genuine feeling and sincerity when she is dealing with the movement which moves her most strongly. That is one salient mark of the proletarian novelists—they are more concerned with life and growth of the cause than of the individual human being.

This is understandable, of course, and largely true of every political activity since the beginning of time. But as far as literature is concerned, it will not be until the proletarian novelists inintegrate the expression of their ideals with first-rate character creation that they will reach and convert the mass of readers.

Taking "A Stone Came Rolling", at its face value as a novel pure and simple, it is less than remarkable, but taking it as an expression of faith and translation into fiction of a great human movement it becomes important. And allied with this importance is a moving and eloquent effort to end suffering and create a new world. For these reasons, read "A Stone Came Rolling."

ures were hill folk who had left their mountains to seek economic independence in the mills. Critics could not place the writer. Obviously "Mr. Burke" was not an untried author. The writing was seasoned. Finally, a North Carolina woman living at the time in New York read the book and told her critic husband that "Mr. Burke" was Olive Tilford Dargan. Ishma, the central figure, could have come only from the pen of the person who had known Evvie and Serena, Emmy Jane, Sam and Grandpap of "Highland Annals."

Mrs. Dargan still regrets that she was found out. She would still like to write behind a nom de plume, and it was fun, she says, being a young man author! She has added two more books to her list as Fielding Burke: "A Stone Came Rolling," a continuation of "Call Home the Heart" and "Sons of the Stranger," a story of mining people in the west at the turn of the century published in 1947.

Many people seek her out in her retreat on Balsam Avenue, and she is gracious to them all, visitors as well as friends, yet leaves them to realize when they are gone that she said little. It was they who talked. She has given them an elusive something, certainly not facts. Mostly an interlude of content and peace. An hour of quiet, broken only by their own talk and their response to her quiet smile and barely suggested conversation.

The shy smile fools all but the most privileged. Those few are taken into the closer fellowship that shares with Mrs. Dargan her deeply sensitive and tolerant approach to human nature, little stories of her friendships over the years, wisps of her experiences so delicate that the listener fears to miss a word, the whys behind her writing, thoughts that evolved into certain of the plays, thoughts about her flowers.

TROUTBECK
AMENIA
NEW YORK

May 12, 1936

Dear Mrs. Dargan:

You were elected yesterday a member of the Spingarn Medal Committee (July 1, 1936 to July 1, 1939). You will be notified officially of your election, but I wanted to tell you how pleased I am.

Always sincerely,

J. E. Spingarn



OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN, poet, playwright, short story writer and novelist, who has been writing in Western North Carolina for more than 25 years, is continuing her work at her home in Asheville. Mrs. Dargan's last three books, all novels, have been published under the nom de plume of "Fielding Burke." Two of them are of hill people who left their homes in the mountains to work in the mills in the central part of North Carolina.—Photo by Lotte Jacobi, New York.

Avoiding The Limelight

By VIRGINIA T. LATHROP

ASHEVILLE. — If North Carolina, like England, conferred titles for notable achievement it would surely head the list with "Dame" Olive Tilford Dargan. In lieu of such official recognition, Mrs. Dargan stands out in the group of distinguished writers of the State as poet, playwright, short story writer, novelist, one who has contributed constantly for the more than 25 years of being a North Carolinian.

So versatile a person she is that she has written, on the one hand, unsurpassed poems of nature and her neighbor folk of the mountains and, on the other, novels of deep social significance as both Olive Tilford Dargan, poet, and Fielding Burke, novelist.

Not that Mrs. Dargan wants to be called anything.

She has spent most of her life avoiding the limelight, publishing under noms de plume, living on a remote farm near the Smokies or in a home in Asheville hidden away from chance passers-by behind beautiful shrubs and trees and flowering vines. Or she has quietly explored, as a teacher, or traveller with her husband before his death early in their married life, the literary world of New York, England, and France.

As a resident of Asheville since 1925 when she bought and remodeled a small log house on the outskirts of town overlooking the mountains, and called it "Bluebonnet Lodge," Mrs. Dargan has found here the perfect place in which to think and write. Thinking comes first. Writing is the result of her meditations, not the purpose. Mrs. Dargan is the rare person who has always written because thoughts welled up in her and had to be expressed, not because writing was her business.

She was only a child when she began putting thoughts on paper, shyly, because they were so precious to her. The daughter of a school teacher in Kentucky, where she was born, and later in Missouri where her father established a school and she became a very young teacher at 14, she was already responding to the beauties of the classics she was reading, to nature and to the depths of people about her, depths often hidden from less understanding individuals.

At Radcliffe, where she studied English and economics, and in Canada where she later taught, she began to coordinate her writing, and to delve into social problems. As secretary for a short time to an industrialist, she got her first impressions of people who worked at machines. After the death of her husband she moved to the mountains of Western North Carolina, to a farm in ~~Jackson~~ County where they had often spent time together, and here she assumed the running of it, and lived close to mountain neighbors.

All of these people and all of these places — farmers, mill workers, Americans, English, French, Canadians, city folks, men and women of the mountains with a philosophy as much their own as was that of the Fabians she knew in England — all of it, with the mists of the mountains, the turning of the furrow in the spring, and the changing colors of the leaves in the fall was being woven into her thoughts.

As early as 1904, influenced at that time by her classical reading, she published her first book of plays, "Semiramis and Other Plays." Four volumes of plays came from her pen, and one of the plays, "The Shepherd," was chosen to open the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York.

Then came poems, "Pathflower," the first book of lyrics, followed by a prizewinning sonnet-sequence "The Cycle's Rim," dedicated to the memory of her husband. Before the publication of "The Lute and the Furrow" she moved to her mountain farm, and in this volume is one of her most beautiful story-poems, "Evvie's Mother." This poem later formed a part of a sketch in "Highland Annals," a collection of sketches which was republished in 1941 as "From My Highest Hills," illustrated with photographs by Bayard Wootten of Chapel Hill.

As Olive Tilford Dargan, the poet she published "Highland Annals." Then, in 1932, a book was published by Longmans, Green by an unknown author, "Fielding Burke," which had a social theme. It centered about the Gastonia mill strike which not long before had shaken North Carolina. Its central fig-

followers of Juarez, when taken, shall be shot. They represent them as outlaws, ruffians stained with a thousand crimes, enemies of humanity. Archbishop Labastida counsels it. Even Carlotta is led to give her voice on the same side through belief that they are plotting to kill her husband. Charles alone backs Maximilian in holding that they should be treated as prisoners of war. Then Aseffa seeks his help to save her husband, who has been captured. Charles is smitten with her beauty, and in order that she may be made a widow, he joins with the rest in advising Maximilian to sign the decree. Maximilian finally does so with great reluctance, and with a proviso that every case should be referred to him before execution, so that he may pardon if he sees fit. This stipulation his generals have no thought of observing.

The third act opens in front of the Imperial Theater, where the birthday of the empire is to be celebrated. Maximilian's power is tottering, but he is still living in a fool's paradise, trusting every one, and believing himself the popular idol—a delusion carefully kept up by all his false advisers. As a hired mob before the theater is shouting in praise of the empire, a man cries, "Long live the republic! Hail to Juarez!" He is dragged away, but one officer says to another: "Don't tell me the republic is dead when a man is willing to die just to give one shout for it." The other answers, "Three-fourths of the Mexicans have hearts of that color."

Aseffa, mourning for Rafael and bent on vengeance, comes to the theater to sing in the chorus. Before entering, she reproaches Charles for his failure to save her husband. He declares his passion, and the Mexican woman repulses him with biting words of scorn.

The second scene is in the theater with the Emperor and Empress in the royal box. Maximilian chides Carlotta for her persistent fears. Loyal songs are sung, and an orator begins a flattering harangue:

This land shall e'er be called the happy land,
And he who rules it—
Aseffa (stepping wildly from the chorus)—Prince of Murderers!
The happy land! O land where widows' cries
Choke heaven, and mothers' tears make each new day
A flood.

She goes on in burning words to paint the misery of the people, the atrocities committed by Maximilian's soldiers under his "black law" against political prisoners, and ends by leaping from the stage into the Emperor's box to stab him. Carlotta throws herself between Maximilian, thus terribly awakened from his dream of a happy and contented people, bitterly reproaches those who have deceived him and defied his orders. But his eyes are as yet only half opened. The Archbishop joins with the others to persuade him that the policy, though dreadful, was necessary. They confess that the forces of Juarez are gaining victories daily, and tell Maximilian that if he deserts them now all his adherents will be massacred. "Juarez will give no quarter." He consents to remain at the head of the government. Then an envoy from France arrives. Louis Napoleon has decided to withdraw the French troops from Mexico, and advises Maximilian to abdicate and leave the country. Maximilian is stunned, but refuses to leave his Mexican followers to face their fate without him. He says to Louis Napoleon's representative:

Tell him that he has placed me here between death and dishonor—and my choice is made.

Carlotta hastens to France to beg help for her husband. She says she knows that she can get it.

The fourth act shows Maximilian besieged in Queretaro; his most trusted lieutenants conspiring with the enemy; Maximilian refusing to the

last to believe in their treachery or to flee. The pl. is taken by Juarez. Aseffa is reunited to Rafael, who has escaped. Juarez sentences Maximilian to be shot, and he is glad to die.

In the last act Carlotta pleads desperately for her husband with Louis Napoleon and with the foreign Ambassadors who have come to congratulate him on the success of the exposition. She reminds them of their plighted faith; she tries every argument and every entreaty. She makes them unhappy and ashamed, but all her efforts fail to shake their views of political expediency. It is a scene that affords great opportunities to a great actress—and to the reader a sickening insight into the game of "politics as it is played." Close upon her plea comes the news of Maximilian's death. The last scene shows Carlotta back at Miramar, insane—by turns wreathing flowers in her hair, in happy expectation of her husband's arrival, or filled with horror by a vision of his being led out to be shot.

This is a bald outline of a touching and terrible play, with many beautiful minor scenes, full from beginning to end with food for thought.

Mrs. Dargan has been deeply interested in Mexico ever since she visited it with her father when a girl. Her last Mexican drama, "The Mortal Gods," has already been described in The Call. It dealt with the intrigues of the American money power in Mexico, and was so revolutionary as to awaken amazement that Scribner should ever have consented to publish it. "Carlotta" is an earlier play that appeared in her first volume of dramas, "Semiramis." But, though written long before the present Mexican situation developed, it might almost have been written as a warning to those Americans who fancy that the best thing for Mexico would be for the United States to go in there and establish a benevolent despotism over the country. Even the best intentioned despotism generally fails to work, and any one must be sanguine indeed who thinks that American rule in Mexico would be mainly benevolent.

By Alice Stone Blackwell

A Drama of Mexico

A remarkable play, foreshadowing the trouble that the United States may have in Mexico, has been written by the Socialist poet and dramatist, Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan. It takes its title, "Carlotta," from the wife of the ill-fated Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico.

In the drama, Maximilian and Carlotta are represented as a high-minded and lovable couple, thoroughly deceived as to the situation in Mexico and the wishes of the people. The first act opens at Miramar, near Trieste. The crown of Mexico is about to be formally offered to Maximilian, and Carlotta's cousin, Count Charles, warns her not to let him accept it. He says:

> The men
> Who've governed Mexico, for the most part,
> Have paid their heads for it.

Carlotta reminds him that Louis Napoleon, the Emperor of France, has urged acceptance, and has pledged himself to support Maximilian's rule in Mexico. Charles answers:

> There is a woman on the throne of France!
> She is the Eve to this slow-blooded Adam,
> Dutch-born Napoleon, and holdeth up
> The globe as 'twere an apple for his hand.
> Mexico, burning with gold and sunset's fire,
> Pouring the crimson of internal strife,
> To her is but a jewel in crude bed
> She'd have you pick and polish for her crown!

The Mexican deputation arrives. The deputies say:

> We make no weary tale of our misfortunes;
> They are so great the world is heavy with them,
> And Mexico means but calamity
> To every ear.

They tell Maximilian that the Mexicans are unanimous in wanting him for their Emperor, and that nothing else can bring peace to their distracted country. Maximilian's brother, the Archduke of Austria, and the official representatives of France and Belgium promise the support of Europe to uphold his government in Mexico. Maximilian leaves the choice to Carlotta. The Mexican deputies and the European diplomats then turn with their entreaties and assurances to her. As she still hesitates, wrung between the wish to see her husband an Emperor and the fear that it may cost him his life, the Abbot of Lacroma appeals to her in the name of the church, declaring it is God's will that Maximilian shall restore peace and prosperity to Mexico. Carlotta yields.

The next scene shifts to a camp in the mountains of Mexico. The action brings out vividly the heroism of Juarez's ragged and half-starved troops, and the devotion of Aseffa, the beautiful wife of Rafael, one of the leaders. The news comes that an Austrian Duke has been crowned Emperor of Mexico, and has been received with acclamation by the people. The soldiers, in disgust and despair, are ready to break their swords. The arrival of Juarez quickly restores their courage. After a stirring speech from him, the soldiers cry:

> We'll die for freedom!
> *Juarez.* Die? That's the one thing
> We cannot do. We may lie down in graves,
> But from our living dust will spring new challenge
> To make in noble minds continual war
> Until our race be righted!
> *Ignacio.* The church is powerful yet, and seeks to join
> Her cause with his.
> *Juarez.* The church? Say not the church,
> But mockers in Christ's name, who steal the land
> And drain its fruitage into Satan's purse,
> Keeping the poor a race of hopeless slaves
> Who worship their own shackles! O Ignorance,
> Thou art the great slave master! Thy very chains
> Are vital and beget themselves; and he
> Who strikes them seems the monster of the earth
> To the poor serf who thinks it is himself
> That bleeds! The church be with our foe, with us
> Be God, we'll ask no more.

At the close of the act, when all have gone out shouting for liberty and Juarez, Juarez stands alone in his gray mantle, looking up to heaven.

> *Juarez.* Spirit of Montezuma, be thou here
> And on thy son drop wisdom out of heaven,
> That these thy children he may lead to peace,
> And this thy country give again to him
> Who set his iron in the earth and said,
> "Man, make thy weapon; there shall be no slaves!"

The second act opens in Maximilian's palace. He is blinded by the lip-loyalty all around him. Carlotta sees something in the people's eyes that she distrusts. Even the imperialists in Mexico do not really want a foreign ruler. They are only using Maximilian and the French troops to crush Juarez and the Republicans, intending later to crown one of themselves as Emperor. Meanwhile their generals are committing all sorts of cruelties without Maximilian's knowledge.

> *General Miramon.* Not a word to the Emperor.
> *Dupin.* Softish, eh?
> *Miramon.* His spongy heart is filled with water of compassion. Touch it anywhere, it pours!
> *Marshal Bazaine.* I'm not going to throw away the lives of any more Frenchmen just to give him a chance to play at clemency. An Emperor should be a sort of vitalized stone, capable of action, but incapable of impression.
> *Dupin.* Then I'm the man for Emperor. By the lord, I've made women who were hungry enough to eat their own children watch my soldiers throw bread into the sea! . . . Ah, sweet woman! you can please me twice. I can dance with you—and I can kill you.

In the intervals of the dance, all the Imperialist generals urge Maximilian to sign a sweeping decree that

"PATH FLOWER"

By Helen Harriet Salls

Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, or "Fielding Burke," author of "A Stone Came Rolling" and many other distinguished books, was born in the hill-country of western Kentucky, and educated at Peabody in Nashville and at Radcliffe. Since 1925, however, she has been a resident of West Asheville. I am glad that I saw her first in the glorious hill-country of North Carolina.

"Path Flower" is the title-poem in her first volume of lyrics, published first in England in 1914. Because I met Mrs. Dargan in a region of flowering paths, and because she so soon vanished, I have in my heart called her "Path Flower." Our ways crossed in the Banners Elk School of English, the "Southern Breadloaf," which was holding its initial session last summer under the genial guidance of America's pioneer professor of books, Dr. Edwin O. Grover, of Rollins College. My admiration of Mrs. Dargan, the poet and playwright, had started around fifteen years ago, when I came upon an scene from her play, "The Poet" (Edgar Allan Poe), in the "Library of Southern Literature." My admiration of the woman started with a slight exchange of letters that demonstrated her exquisite courtesy. In the summer of 1934, I met at Duke University a young school teacher who lived near Mrs. Dargan's summer home in Almond, North Carolina; from her I heard of her writer-friend's warm interest in her neighbors, of her gentleness and her loyalty. Last July, on arrval at the School of Englsh, I was cheered by the news that Mrs. Dargan would appear in the evening lecture-series. Thus it came about that I had my first real look at Olive Tilford Dargan in the first specialized School of English in the South, in the first class in "The Art of Writing Poetry" perhaps ever conducted by a woman in a graduate school in North Carolina. On that Friday morning, August 2, when I entered Miss Eunice Tietjens' classroom where she sat facing not a "sacred mountain" but the very solid Beech, I noticed a new somebody in the room—a little lady in a large hat shadowing a sweet face of singular brightness of expression. That was for me a "red-letter" hour. The glowing-eyed Miss Tietjens in vibrant tones chanted Oriental verse, and within her "charmed circle," an appreciative listener, sat the hazel-eyed poet from Asheville. It was after that class, in the midst of the hall-traffic, that I met Mrs. Dargan: the short interchange of greetings left me with that buoyant feeling that certain people have the gift of inducing. I think it is their greatness willing to be little that somehow expands our littleness; we are always really larger for such contacts.

Mrs. Dargan's program that evening was the final number in the series of lectures and entertainments offered the general public by the Banners Elk School of English. Not least responsive among her auditors were several guests of Pinnacle Inn, not connected with the school. There is nothing spectacular about Mrs. Dargan, but

But somewhere in Ishma's untutored mind there is a germ of relentless ambition, a determination to see more of the world than is bounded by Lame Goat Ridge, to find a richer and more spacious way of life and, above all, to escape the uselessness and waste which fell to the lot of the average mountain woman. This ambition, pathetically nourished by mail-order catalogues, by the colored pages of an occasional woman's magazine or by the polished speech of an infrequent visitor from the outlands, develops into the deepest impulse of Ishma's nature.

"Call Home the Heart" is a long book, and Mr. Burke has allowed himself plenty of space in which to elaborate his theme. Ishma's struggle against the idea of marriage and her ultimate surrender to it, her desperate effort to escape at the moment when things seem most hopeless by deserting her husband and child and running away to the town, are built up with a wealth of detail which lends to the story a compelling reality. Throughout the first half of the book, at least, Mr. Burke writes with painstaking art and with an informing clarity of purpose. It is only in the later chapters, in which Ishma enters the spooling room of a cotton mill and is drawn into the struggle between the organized mill hands and the wealthy owners, that the motif becomes a little obscured.

Nevertheless, the portrait of Ishma is sufficiently vigorous and appealing to hold the reader. "Call Home the Heart" is not a great novel, but it is an exceptionally good one.

there is something far better. As she stood there in her graceful black gown, reading from her own poems, she seemed a prophetess of a new order. She gave us a wide variety from her yet uncollected verse: soft flowing descriptive lines, lines leaping with fire, lines bathed in the blue of heaven. Consolation and challenge were the keynotes of her program — the consolation of beauty and the challenge of an exalted discontent. One feels that Mrs. Dargan's life has been a quest for the Grail, not for herself alone but for all humanity. She longs intensely for a reconciliation of right and might, for that harmonization of material forces so essential to the evolution of the race. At the end of her hour, I felt the exhilaration of widened horizons.

A Lees-McRae student who was with me must have felt it too; for she had hardly stirred during the sixty minutes. I shall not soon forget Mrs. Dargan's words to my young companion afterward. I had told her that Helen loved poetry, and as she took the girl's hand, she said in the sweetest, friendliest way: "If you love it long enough, perhaps you will write it some day."

But the poet Mrs. Dargan has loved much more than poetry. She has loved the common people, the humblest folk of farm and factory; like Chaucer's knight, she has loved "trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie," the bases of Christian civilization; and in spite of inevitable disillusionments, she has kept the home-fires of her spirit burning high. These things have given her that fine insight and that noble imaginative power which characterize alike her poems, her plays, and her novels. "What distinguishes 'A Stone Came Rolling' from lesser strike novels," said John Chamberlain in the New York Times, "is its understanding of the conflicting motives of a whole community." That sentence alone is a striking tribute. Whether Fielding Burke, novelist, or Olive Tilford Dargan, dramatist and poet, she is first of all the clear-headed, compassionate, "understanding" woman. The final stanza of her poem, "The Great Man," shows well her spiritual calibre:

"Ay, thy gleaming spear is ours;
Ours thy fearless, golden bow;
And our shining arrows go
From thy bright untaken towers.
Thou art what we will to be,
Sceptre, star, and winged cloud;
We are blood and brawn of thee,
Glowing up through sod and stone,
Burning through thy rended shroud,
Moving with thee, chainless, on,
Till the world, a quickened whole,
Truth-delivered, naked, free,
Once again hath found its deathless soul."

Since a prophet is often honored last in his own country, it is probable that the Old North State will be among the slowest to laud "Fielding Burke" as she deserves. But North Carolina, fully aware of it or not, is honored in having even as an adopted daughter so versatile, sincere, and brilliant a literary artist as Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan.

need not wait for Time to make him a classic. He can place his scenes in an Age far from ours, as in "The Ides of March", and set the flame of life burning in his characters until we feel their human relationship with ourselves. But—our writers coming on to-day want a part in the evolving world about them:

"They are not satisfied with the meagre modernity gained by evoking the human current that flows like a spinal cord through all ages. They want to deal with problems far great-er than any that can be resurrected from times long past.

"It is trite to say that literature must reflect life, trite to say that a transition era is Art's most difficult period. But we must face the fact that such a period is on us, and we must breathe it, grasp it, write it down, as its facets are revealed through human beings, famous or obscure.

"We now have courageous writers who have taken a definite stand against a world of injustice and decay; who attempt to ~~give~~ find in the present chaos the Soul of the future that is undoubtedly within it. They have not yet succeeded as 'stylists', but their increase in numbers and power assures us that this tense, eruptive age, that overwhelms complacence and placidity will have permanent mould in the writer's art."

And there, beginner-writers, are some pearls of writing wisdom to string upon your strands set aside for gems of advice from successful professional writers!

placidity

TIMES
NEW YORK CITY
FEB 28 1932

"Call Home

CALL HOME THE HEART. *Fielding Burke.* 432 pp. *New York: Longmans, Green & Co.* $2.50.

LIFE in the Southern mountains has been depicted from many points of view and in many guises, ranging from the purely poetic, through various phases of the quaint and picturesque, to be grimly realistic. From the simple and primitive life of the mountain people, from their simple and marvelously appropriate speech, Maristan Chapman has coined pure beauty—but it is a beauty which seems at times somewhat out of touch with life as it is actually lived, a beauty which exists principally in the mind of the artist. There is beauty of an inevitable kind in "Call Home the Heart"—the beauty of the mountains themselves, of wooded valleys at sunset, of a forest fire sweeping up over Dark Moon Ridge, or the morning mists lingering about the slopes of Cloudy Knob. This natural loveliness is set in almost painful contrast against the harsh actualities of mountain life, against the struggle, now bitter and now discouraged and half-hearted, with poverty and hunger, against the inescapable human facts of misery and dirt and disease and death.

This contrast is skillfully emphasized in the life of the mountain girl, Ishma Waycaster, who feels the beauty of the mountains as a natural and integral part of herself, but who chafes against the ugliness and squalor of her cabin home. There seems little choice for Ishma but to accept the common lot of the mountain woman, to marry and bear children—more children, probably, than her husband can buy shoes and school books for—to work in the fields of a starved mountain farm and to wear out her strength and spirit over the hoe and the washtub.

S, INC.
New York

TELEPHONE: CALEDONIA 5-5576

CABLE ADDRESS: ANWAT, N. Y.

January 23, 1936

My dear Mrs. Dargan:

I am delighted to hear from Maxwell Aley of Longman's Green that you have approved of the terms as outlined in my letter to him of the proposed contract between yourself and Antoinette Perry for the dramatic rights to A STONE CAME ROLLING.

Before drawing the contract Miss Perry would like very much to meet you and discuss with you her ideas for the dramatization, and she asks me to find out where you expect to be during the next two or three weeks. She would be glad to go down to West Ashville to see you, or if you should happen to be going to be anywhere nearer New York during that time, perhaps she could arrange to meet you elsewhere?

May I hear from you?

Yours sincerely,

Monica McCall

Ann Watkins, Inc.

Mrs. Olive Dargan,
West Ashville
North Carolina.

MMc/d

ANN WATKINS, INC.
210 Madison Avenue, New York
TELEPHONE: CALEDONIA 5-5576
CABLE ADDRESS: ANWAT, N. Y.

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Mrs. Dargan's first two books, "Semiramis And Other Plays", and "Lords and Lovers And Other Dramas," were written during the six years they lived looking out across the Hudson to the Palisades.

Two books written in England followed: "The Mortal Gods", containing three poetic dramas, and a volume of lyrics, "Path Flower". "The Cycle's Rim", "Flutter Of The Gold Leaf" (with Dr. Frederic Peterson) and "Lute And Furrow" were issued during the next eight years.

While Mrs. Dargan has lived in many places in her native country, and in Canada and Europe, her anchorage at present is an ancient log house, named "Blue Bonnet Cabin". It is in the mountain region of Western North Carolina, near Asheville

Experience As Aid to Writing

When Mrs. Dargan was asked, during a recent interview, whether would-be writers, or beginners, need have many rich and varied experiences, like herself, before being able to write, she replied:

"Neither a "Yes" nor a "No" will answer that one. You see, the essential being is within us—to be drawn upon at will. As Paul Ingle said of Emily Dickinson, she had "an inner continent to travel," and could

write beautifully and wisely from a limited outward life.

"Others acquire knowledge from much reading and, more or less ably, put their gains through a transforming process. But I would say that most writers are all the better for a wide span of experience in their equipment. This need not discourage the young, for even childhood, as many autobiographies show, encounters life with vibrating, scouting antennae that bring in lasting values. Values that may be used later when the writer, as a man, is hardly conscious of their source."

Life was eventful for Olive Tilford before she turned to writing. She was born in Kentucky, into a family of school teachers. When she was ten the family moved to Missouri, and again to the foothills of the Ozarks. There Professor Tilford founded a successful academy.

Olive received a year of training from her father, and, at the age of fourteen, took charge of a school of her own. Some of her pupils were older than herself.

At sixteen she entered Peabody Teachers' College in Nashville. After graduation, and two years of teaching in San Antonio, Texas, she went North, to Radcliff College, Cambridge. She married Pegram Dargan, of Harvard, went to New York to live and to write; eventually she took the pen-name of "Fielding Burke."

Tragedy cast its shadow over her when, in 1915, her husband was drowned on his way to Cuba. She returned to the highland farm which they had purchased in the Smokies. She undertook to restore the high slopes to production. It was hard work, her writing almost forgotten. But her poems did occasionally appear in The *Atlantic*, *Scribner's*, *Century*, and other magazines. The mountain people, with their dramatic appeal became her subjects, and she wrote a series of stories about them. later they were collected and published under the titles "Highland Annals" and "From My Highest Hill." When she relinquished life on the peaks, and settled near Asheville, she wrote a novel, "Call Home The Heart"; three years later, "A Stone Came Rolling", then twelve years later "Sons of the Stranger." Mrs. Dargan always writes with social purpose, "for the future," as she expresses it.

Advice for beginners

Asked whether she had any particular advice for the modest and humble beginner, she replied:

"I hesitate to deal with human futures, but as such advice is rarely taken I will risk it a little, but, of course, omitting genius, which I am not qualified to discuss. Genius is a fire that goes only into moulds of its own choosing.

"The usual prospective author would do well, I think, to pay his respects to the much worn dictum of Sir Philip Sydney and look into his own heart for what stock in trade may be there.

If he finds certain indefinable riches that make solitude a joy and loneliness unknown; a power in awareness that can kindle slight things into a significance, and tracks of experience that go deep, he has something to begin with and may set off with all the enthusiasm he can whip up.

"He can not build living characters without real interest in, and generous understanding of, the other fellow, whoever or wherever he may be. If an objectionable person is necessary to a drama or a novel, the author, as an artist, should be able to get into that person's skin and feel himself alive there."

Production methods

When Mrs. Dargan was asked if there is any particular line of production that she would advise a young writer to follow, she smiled and replied:

"I wouldn't dare volunteer such advice. The field is now so enlarged that it admits of all kinds and variety of the writing product. A person who may follow one line to success might fail abjectly in another. He must choose for himself according to his own inner leaning and talent potential.

"However, if his goal is the novel. I am sufficiently biased to advise him to shy from writers who seem magnetized by the dump-heap and its hopeless pathology. We have highly talented authors who use their brilliant power as a reagent to precipitate the dregs of society, for no apparent purpose save as an exhibit.

"Dregs are legitimate material when used by Steinbeck—if I may choose a name—with art that, implicitly, of course, makes us feel our guilt and inoculates the soul with an urge that will not die of inaction."

Conrad is one of Mrs. Dargan's favorite authors. To the question:

you think literary style has changed much in late years, as for example, since Conrad, she replied:

"It certainly has! And it is still changing, swiftly as the life that gives it substance, is changing. But Conrad still can teach us; for instance, with his genius for words. A writer must have tender respect for his implements: words. They are wonderful things, chameleon carriers, taking their color from the meanings they bear.

Love for words

"Genuine love for them makes one careful in their handling, and this is one reason that Conrad can fascinate us with the way he so fervently gets a tenuous, almost inexpressible thought, into vivid certitude.

"Speaking for myself, I do grow impatient with his gloom, a sort of hopeless devotion to "things as they are." I like an author to show some consciousness of the fact that society is not stationary, and that a greater life for the social man is about due.

"Ellen Glasgow is another excellent writer who has attained a claim to style without impinging on the human future or any universal border. Her characters press as far as individualism permits, some of them almost ready to burst with doing their best, and with no inkling that their best is not enough.

"Her portrayals can be helpfully studied, but the student must remember that "style" is never reached through imitation. He can achieve it only as something that belongs to himself. It is still an indisputable truth that 'Style is the man.'"

When Mrs. Dargan (or Fielding Burke) was asked to mention some contemporaries whose style she cared to discuss, she said: "I am wary of contemporaries because they can talk back. But there are several whose manner and method have given their work the certain value that we dignify as style. Thornton Wilder comes to mind at once as perhaps first on the list that experienced readers would select as 'stylists.'

On stylists

"He is so perfected in manner, so sure in capturing effects, that he

Because it once was said to men, whom worms
Made dust of twice ten hundred years ago,
"The poor are always with you," such as you
Shall not forever pick your way to ease
O'er broken bodies, lifting up white brows
And hiding crimson feet! Daring to make
The Christ your sheltering sanction while you feed
On others' lives, and keep injustice sleek
Even as you cosset that dim thing, your soul,
And preen the wings you think bear you aloft
The puddled world!

Her. You lie! You do not know
Our gentle hearts, our—

LeV. Gentle? O, you're nice,
You later cannibals, and will not eat
Of babes at table, but you'll pipe their blood
From unoffending distance, while you pray
Your conscience numb, and swear the source is clean.
Some dare to name that fount the Love of God,
And kneel him thanks!

In another scene, where Hernda is overcome with the revelations of the iniquity and misery of the world, Hernda exclaims to the sister of the revolutionist:

Men do well
To keep the women blind. If once they knew,
They'd breed no more. . . . Yet you, Señora, knew,
And you have children. By your motherhood
You've bound you Life's accomplice—given it heart
And veins and an accepting soul.

The Señora answers:

I have!
Deny our hearts these babes, and we deny
The future that we fight for. Ah, defeat
May be endured by those who hold in lap
The victors of tomorrow!

No name has appeared more regularly or more frequently in the magazines of recent years than Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan's, and her powerful poetry is one of the billows of the swirling and tumbling river of between lakes which the new editor of the Century is watching with quiet but deep excitement.

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Her latest epic is "Sons of the Stranger", a book about men, women, and mining in the early days of our century.

Mrs. Dargan began her writing career when, as a young woman, she went North from Texas, where she was teaching school, for special study at Radcliff College, Cambridge. Here she met Pegram Dargan, a brilliant young South Carolinan, in his senior year at Harvard. They were married, and moved to New York iCty.

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MARKE
FEBRUARY---1950

Write For The Future

Advice on Writing with Social Purpose

An Interview With

FIELDING BURKE

By CAROL BIRD

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FIELDING BURKE Has Good Advice
For Beginners (See Page 6)

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THE MORTAL GODS

The Latest Poetic Dramas by Olive Tilford Dargan

The Mortal Gods. By Olive Tilford Dargan. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

POETRY and drama are naturally and inevitably linked because they are both the result of the same vital impulse to express truth and art. Great poetry is the highest impulse, when truth of itself breaks into song. Drama is the same impulse rendered in an appeal to the eye. We are speaking now of only that which is best in poetry and in drama. All else in the final analysis sinks into a self-begotten oblivion. Since poetry, then, is primarily an appeal to the ear, and drama an appeal to the eye, we see the inevitable consequence which should weld the two into one. To mention that such attempts are not always successful is as far from the point, as to say that the Greeks were of no importance to humanity because their empires have ceased to exist. All vital impulses must repeatedly sink themselves in failure, that the robings of success may be worn with all humility. Success is so small a thing compared with the eternal impulses of truth. That a poet or a dramatist has grasped a thread from the woof of infinite beauty and infinite truth, and has sought to interpret its expression for all men, is the measure of the poet's worth, since in these two things we have the evidence of the understanding heart and the visioning eye which are the attributes of the true poet.

During the last few years it has come to be a usual conclusion that poetic drama is valuable only for reading, that it lacks some of the necessary attributes for successful production on the stage. We cannot believe that, at base, this is the fault of our actors, for the annual reproductions of Shakspearean plays prove to us that we have actors who are able to give vocal utterance to poetry. Nor can the blame be laid wholly upon our audiences, for there always remain the small proportion of people who are glad to see serious effort on the stage. We must conclude then, that the fundamental fault lies with the poets or playwrights. Of the two ways of erring, we must confess sadly, that more danger lies in the poet's not being conversant with the rules of dramatic art than from the playwrights not being able to write good verse. Between these two extremeties, perhaps because of them, there has sprung up a relatively new form of poetic drama, which is never intended for stage production. It is an unnatural growth but it has its advantages. There are innumerable things in this wide universe which the poet-playwright recognizes as fundamentally dramatic, though there is no way with the contemporary possibilities of the stage arrangements to give them adequate production. Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound" is a splendid example of this, for there is in it so much which is immensely dramatic, though we can imagine no adequate means by which stage appliances could create successfully the illusion which the written words produce.

Mrs. Dargan in "The Mortal Goods" seeks a mean between the two kinds of poetic drama. She tries to formulate certain social injustices by a suppression of actual conditions and a creation of imaginary conditions to express more clearly these difficulties. The essential message is the crime of overweening ambition, which in the case of "The Mortal Gods" takes the form of greed for gold. It is not clear whether the conditions are meant to be symbolical or whether they are a pure fabric of possibilities. Assaria, the city of greed and gold-getting, where Hudibrand, the oppressor, dwells, has the same climate as New York. So far we follow easily. Goldusan is a tropical country, whose mines have been worked, whose railroads have been built and whose peasants have been enslaved by Hudibrand, who has gradually gained possession of everything in the land. The outcome of the play is the final triumph of the people of Goldusan, roused at last to throw off the yoke of oppression by the efforts of Hernda, the daughter of Hudibrand. There are hints here of outrages which recent investigation has shown to have been perpetrated in tropical countries at the present time, and there are prophecies to which recent social outcries have given serious tone. The strength of the play lies in the breadth of the author's conception—the power of her vision. There is a fine dramatic climax when Hernda disguised as Famette effects the escape of Chatrien and Le Val, and is condemned to the flames by Megaro, who loves her as Hernda and does not recognize her. No man will touch her, but of her own will she passes into the hut, outside which the fagots are placed. No one will light the fire, and suddenly the door opens and Famette appears in the robes of Osa, the worshipped Deliverer. Even Megaro falls back afraid, and beneath his eyes she leads away his people. The recital of Mrs. Dargan's treatment is fine and effective. No unnecessary word mars the vividness of the picture.

Of the other two plays, "The Son of Hermes" and "Kidmir," the former is placed in the Greece of the days of Alcibiades, and the latter in Asia Minor at the time of the Crusades. Though there is good work in both, neither touches the level of "The Mortal Gods" in power of portrayal or in beauty of language. This volume of plays is a marked advance on Mrs. Dargan's earlier work, and gives promise of even better.

D. L. M.

Transcript -
E. A. Clement

BOSTON EVENING T

The Listener

BRAVE and inspiriting indeed are the words of the salutatory of the new editor of the Century, Mr. Robert Sterling Yard. "There is no escaping the fact that civilization, like the river tumbling and swirling between two lakes, is passing turbulently from the old convention of the last several generations to the unknown, almost unguessable convention of the not distant future," he says. This certainly shows both vision and a powerful pen. And Mr. Yard does not content himself with covering the ground in generalities and "barren idealities." He specifies and itemizes, and is evidently ready to take hold of the life and questions of the new century with both hands. "The feminist movement, the uprising of labor, the surging of innumerable socialistic currents, can mean nothing else than the certain readjustment of social levels. The demand of the people for the heritage of the bosses is not short of revolution. The rebellious din of frantic impressionistic groups is nothing if not protest against a frozen art. The changed Sabbath and the tempered sermon mark the coldly critical appraisement of religious creeds. And science, meantime, straining and sweating under the lash of progress, is passing from wonder unto wonder." A broad mind, and one in touch and sympathy with the forward tendencies of the time, is indicated here.

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Yet there is to be "no muckraking" in Mr. Yard's programme, he promptly adds. This is a relief for which there can hardly be too much thanks. The "exposure" has been long since run into the ground; it had become commercialized and professional. All that the new editor undertakes in this line will be, he promises, "in the fair, free, unbiased spirit of investigation." There are larger and deeper things than politics and economics—the new chemistry's amazing revelations, for instance, the psychologist's exciting laboratory findings, the biologist's artificial propagation of life, the harnessing of the atmosphere for telegraphy and aviation. Then there is the state of American literature and the cultivation of better literary tastes among the people. Mr. Yard is apparently no Bourbon as to the new forms and aspirations in literary production. It seems he regards this present time as a fallow period—one of those "periods when men live literature, not write it, and consequently literary barrenness may mean merely lying fallow and still be progress." In all this the new editor of the Century is not breaking with its past, is not proposing to make a new Century only one that, as we say, "comes down to brass tacks." Dr. Holland, its first editor, championed, in his way, the "free spirit of modern progress," Mr. Gilder, though more the artist than the publicist, yet lent a hand in waking the civic consciousness and civic conscience; Mr. Johnson, too, emphasized public helpfulness. The fourth editorship is plainly to follow loyally all of the distinctive and best traditions of the Century's near half-century, but it looks as though the latest régime might sharpen and deepen the magazine's impress upon its time.

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There is no question that, just as "leaves have their time to fall," so magazines go through their seasons of spring, summer and autumn—though with one, at least, of them the autumnal glories may be indefinitely prolonged; in all steady essentials its autumn is the most fruitful and brilliant of all its periods. This aging tendency is as true of the magazine literature on one side of the Atlantic as on the other. With the great majority, however, the springtime of jocund and abundant promise, and even perhaps the summer of splendid realization for a few years, are followed by the sere and yellow leaf of dying interest, and mere repetition of a settled formula by the same old set of contributors, year in and year out. The editor of genius is the one who knows good material when he sees it, even though from an unknown and untried source. It is safer of course to depend on writers who have been proved and have made good. But that way sameness lies. Unnumbered American magazines have failed; fine monthlies and solid quarterlies founded and conducted by the best of American literary talent, men and women of the rank of say, N. P. Willis, Edgar Allan Poe, Margaret Fuller, Edward Everett Hale, Julia Ward Howe, James Russell Lowell—and lie buried under wintry snows of oblivion, so deep that their very names are forgotten, though in their day they lay on every well-conditioned family's library table. It is the exception to survive the generation in which a magazine started. Obviously one way to keep abreast of the times is to harness (in due proportion, of course) the young and unheard-of writers to your wagon!

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At the great meeting in Symphony Hall of the national federation of women's clubs, a few years back, Mr. Thomas Nelson Page, in his introduction, pronounced the Southern poet of the occasion, Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, the first American poet of her day. Mrs. Dargan is one of those who have foreseen and estimated at its true importance that transition from old to new conventions which has so impressed itself upon the new editor of the Century and probably will upon his pages. Mrs. Dargan's latest published work is a third volume of plays in verse. The opening play, which gives its name to the book, "The Mortal Gods," deals with the intrigues of American capitalists for the exploitation of Mexico, a subject obviously rich in dramatic possibilities. In the play the United States figures under the name of Assaria, and Mexico under that of Goldusan. The chief characters are Hudibrand, a money-king, who has gathered into his hands the financial power of Assaria; his daughter, Hernda, blindly devoted to her father and unconscious of his oppressions of the people, and Chartrien, his ward, betrothed to Hernda. A revolutionist escaped from Goldusan and sheltered by Chartrien, talking with Hernda, says:

E. A. Clement, Editor Boston Evening Transcript 1909 to 1929

While there she met a Harvard senior, Pegram Dargan, whom she married and for six years they lived in New York. Like so many interesting people, they came to Western North Carolina in search of health, freedom and the far horizon. Of her sketches, "Highland Annals," John Hay said: "It is Mrs. Dargan's own story of her years among the people, sharing in all their activities, respecting their independence, accepting their code, and struggling as they struggled, with their own patience and valor, until the walls of reticence vanished and she found herself admitted to their circle as an equal and beloved member."

Illness compelled her to spend a long convalescence in Europe and it was then that the great tragedy of her life occurred when her husband was drowned on a voyage to Cuba. Mrs. Dargan returned to her farm in the Unakas and tried to forget her own sorrow in bringing a more abundant life to the 23 children and 8 adults who formed the tenant population on her mountain land. During this time, as she confided to the writer, she had the urge to write, but at the end of the day was too tired to do more than stumble to her bed. In 1925 she moved to Asheville and has since called it home, except for the time spent in France, Switzerland and New York.

In a recent issue of the Asheville *Citizen-Times*, Joy Kime Benton, a close friend of Mrs. Dar[illegible]'s, who is widely known for her hooked tapestries as well as for her literary work, reviews most interestingly Fielding Burk[illegible] latest novel, "A Stone Came Rolling." Unlike "Call Home the Heart," which it complements, and which had a mountain setting, this scene is laid in Piedmont North Carolina but the surroundings are just as faithfully portrayed because Fielding Burke has "lived and loved in lower lands." Space forbids any sort of review of "A Stone Came Rolling," the Book Union's choice for December, to which John Chamberlain gave his entire column in the New York *Times* and which he calls "the conflict of capital and labor in a region that has lagged behind the rest of the country in unionization and in the granting or wresting of social services through factory legislation." He compares the book to Ellen Glasgow's "Vein of Iron" and while he feels that Fielding Burke's "sense of the issues involved is probably clearer than Miss Glasgow's," he suggests that "if a reader will take 'Vein of Iron' and 'A Stone Came Rolling' as complementary, he will be making the first step toward understanding the bewildering complexity of the American scene." Mr. Chamberlain says it is inconclusive because it is written about a conflict that has not yet been concluded, but he is as powerfully impressed with the truth and importance of the book as the writer was impressed with the depths of the author's social consciousness. Clubs desiring a study of social conditions and wishing further light on such problems would do well to include Mrs. Dargan's book in their programs.

Olive Tilford Dargan was distinguished in the realm of poetry before she became a novelist, some of her finest reviews having been evoked by her poems. Outstanding critics considered her dramas in blank verse "the high water mark since Shakespeare" and Edmund Clarence Stedman called her "a writer of the royal line."

Her sonnet, "The Cycle's Rim," dedicated to "one drowned at sea," would have placed her among the immortal poets if she had written nothing else. In the field of literary drama she collaborated with Dr. Frederic Peterson, of Columbia University, to produce "The Flutter of the Gold Leaf and Other Dramas."

Mrs. Dargan has a real admiration for North Carolina club women and their honesty of purpose and says she thinks they have an awareness and integrity that give a core of value to w[illegible]er they do. She graciously expressed [illegible] hon-ored in having her pictu[illegible]he

Clubwoman and submitted several poems from which the following has been selected:

To the moon

Evening on the Mountain

Thou, unhorizoned as eternity,
Yet of Time's rounded hour thy mirror making,
Thy heart the sun, thy hand the gathering sea,
Yet in a flower thine ample lodging taking;
Who veins the secret marble and the leaf,
And wakes proud thought to shine through jungle scarring
Till from a scented reed, as summer brief,
Man breathes the forest some dim star is wearing;
These are thy shadows; here I strip me free
Of myths and days; of grieving and of fearing;
Tatters of fame, and love that bannered me;
Here bare me as the moonlight, only hearing,
As in thy music, universe, flow,
And even as music to thy silence go.

—From *Atlantic Monthly.*

Sat Review of Literature
New York
NOV 30 1935



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA: SOUTH BUILDING, BUILT IN 1798

Fielding Burke (Olive Tilford Dargan), Paul Green, and Thomas Wolfe, whose latest books are reviewed on these pages, all hold degrees from the University of North Carolina.

Whether or not it is possible to make art the vehicle of ethics or economics, it is true that the pure fire of Mrs. Dargan's poetry is often tinged with the colors of conflict arising from a desire to hasten the day of life more abundant,—life that lies beyond the battle which is yet to be won on material ground.

> More shall the Man-child have
> Than his filled granaries;
> The healing oil, the body's salve;
> These will concern him not
> When as his breath they shall be his,
> And as his breath forgot.

Led by spiritual rack and thirst, he shall forge on, while

> "blue from blue, horizons press,
> And skies move back their walls."

It was Olive Dargan's desire for sociological truth that brought her to Radcliffe. English, of course, was her chief interest, of [illegible] studies in political economy and kindred subjects led her back to life for a solution of social disease and misery; and she has never fled from any stress, or evaded any experience for the sake of what she might have justly considered her "duty to art."

In 1914 her first volume of short poems was published by Dent in London, under the title of *Pathflower*. In writing of this book in the New York *Times*, Miss Rittenhouse, herself a poet and subtle interpreter of poetry, said that after so much writing in the dramatic form, Mrs. Dargan's spontaneous lyrical utterance gave a surprise to her most sanguine prophets. "Poetry," she said, "must have the magic of revelation; it must bring the familiar word as a mesage from afar; and this Mrs. Dargan can and does do." *The Cycle's Rim*, a sonnet series, was next published in 1916. Of this work so careful a critic as George Edward Woodberry has written that he finds in it "a wonderful *élan* and far reach of thought, the mastery of both simple and rare images alike, and the old antique artist-stroke of expression that always wakes me up like a thunder-clap on a clear morning, so unexpected is it nowadays, and so it rallies the spirit!" Many critics have agreed with Professor Woodberry; notably among them, the judges who awarded to Mrs. Dargan the $500 prize offered by the Southern Society of New York.

This third volume of lyrics, *Lute and Furrow*, nobly sustains every claim hitherto made by Mrs. Dargan's admirers. To quote from the San Francisco *Chronicle*: "Here is a spirit that rejoices in the hills, the grass and the cotton stalks, and the lives of the people about her whose feet are held to the furrow, and is near enough to the sky to have hope of the world. . . . Any reader must indeed

> Confess to the speedwell and robins
> [illegible] have a new comrade.

That they have a new comrade"

The New Orient — New York —

International Journal of Fellowship

Swyd Horsain Editor

Meynell. Among his published works are "The Feast of Youth", "The Coloured Garden", "The Magic Tree" and "Perfume of Youth" (The Shama's Publishing House, Mount Road, Madras, India). The very considerable achievement already to his credit promises a rich fruition of his genuis. * * * **D. Rudhyar** is one of the four persons in America who *know* Oriental Music. And that is only a part of the unusual erudition he has amassed. * * *

Poem in this number of the Magazine

The University of North Carolina recently conferred upon **Olive Tilford Dargan** the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters for "her position of prominence in the Southern literary movement and for her artistic and imaginative interpretation of North Carolina life". A native Kentuckian, Mrs. Dargan has been living for several years at her home in the Blue Ridge Mountains. She is a distinguished and authentic poet. * * *



Olive Tilford Dargan

From Atlantic Monthly brochure —

A WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CLUB WOMAN INTERVIEWS THE AUTHOR OF "A STONE CAME ROLLING"

At the very end of Balsam Avenue in West Asheville, this exploring club woman came to an ancient house of logs with tall singing pines for a background and distant mountains for a vista. Knowing that an important novel was just off the press of Longmans, Green & Co. and having a genuine interest in women and the things they do, the search was on for this author of "A Stone Came Rolling," by Fielding Burke, whose real name is Olive Tilford Dargan.



OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN

It was not hard to locate Mrs. Dargan's home, for it is distinctive amid its surroundings. After meeting its owner it was still easier to connect her with this house of logs—evidently the home of a pioneer. She, too, is distinctive and you instantly know why she found herself, as she said, "[t]he owner of this quaint old place, with [i]ts spacious lawn insuring privacy even [t]hough neighbors hover closely around. Climbing roses, clematis and trumpet vine run riot over those ancient logs, and boxwood and evergreens peculiar to the mountains add their beauty to a house that bespeaks the primitive, sturdy mountaineer.

As this "explorer" covered the flagstones leading to the house, the author turned back from an intended visit next door to extend a friendly greeting. Immediately all fears were dispelled as to the result of the interview, for Olive Dargan has that quality which at once puts you at ease and there is no lagging in her welcome. Inside the house, everything bespeaks home and cozy living. There is every convenience for modern comfort, as well as many objects of beauty gathered in the owner's world wanderings. One could think of no place more conducive to the business of writing a book than right here where the new blends with the old and where peace seems permanent.

It was hard to get Mrs. Dargan to talk about herself and her *life*—personal things which the writer knew other women would be interested in hearing. She is naturally shy and dislikes the light of publicity. One feels instinctively that she is just as sincere in this reaction as Colonel Lindbergh and to this amateur interviewer such reticence met with a sympathetic response and it was respected. When asked why she chose her nom de plume—Fielding Burke—she confessed to a feeling that her writings could be more sincere and honest if she could eliminate *herself*. She also admitted anticipating a certain glee in hiding behind this assumed name, while she *experienced* the public's reaction to her work. This hope proved, however, to be short-lived, for as soon as Mrs. Laurence Stallings read her first novel, "Call Home the Heart," she recognized the style and the secret was out!

From an earlier review we learn that Olive Tilford was born in Kentucky of old Virginia stock who pioneered into the west. She graduated from Peabody College in Nashville at 19 and spent one year at Radcliffe studying English and philosophy.

Times MAR 6 1932
Los Angeles Calif

FIRST NOVEL VIBRATES WITH ELEMENTAL COLORS

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green & Co., New York.

The mood of detached appraisal is usually an easy one for the reviewer to maintain. But three or four times a year a book appears that makes it difficult to remain calm. One of these stirring books is just out. It is "Call Home the Heart" by Fielding Burke, a powerful story of a Carolina mountain girl who cherished the vision of a life filled with effort and opportunity, with beauty and enlightenment.

Ishma lived in the crowded three-room cabin her enterprising great-grandfather had built. Her widowed mother, her older sister and a troop of nieces and nephews kept the place noisy and disordered. From it Isthma escaped Sundays to the high wooded hills, where she was happy in "a world of tumbling waters and wild odors." The rest of the time she waged relentless battle on slovenliness and shiftlessness.

As Ishma approached womanhood, she began to realize that she could never bring order and harmony into the family. And she began to plan escape into a bright, strange world where energy might win through to the lovely way of life she believed possible. For long she withstood the wooing of the provident Rad and the guitar-playing Britt. It was the latter who stirred her senses and tempted her to give up her dreams. How at last Britt won her is a dramatic episode which vibrates with all the elemental colors of youth and love.

The endless struggle failed to break Ishma's spirit. She rebelled against squalor, against her sponging and quarrelsome family, against that in her blood that bound her to Britt. At last she abandoned all she loved and all she hated. She left her mountains and her husband and went to a mill town.

Drawn into the hard life of the workers, she fought with them in a strike, nursed the sick and fed the half-starved children. While the life in the mills is pictured with vividly illuminative detail, the author's interest is here transferred from Ishma to social injustice, with a weakening of the story. But he has such tenderness and depth in character delineation, such masterly technique in marshalling his incidents and such fervor in presenting them that he stirs and delights his absorbed reader. A most unusual first novel.

The Secret Self

GRADUALLY she became possessed of a secret. Every sordid and ugly life had its hidden war in the service of a dream; its struggle behind drab matter-of-fact; its timidity and pride, fearing to be found out. That was the mystery she had so often seen in chilled, coffined faces. Dead lips drawn over lifelong, unconfessed defeat; curved with the triumph of concealment; the dream safe from life's insolences and surprises. But suppose it could be released into life? into growth? That bright, yearning germ, which no heart was without? What incalculable gain! Every man at his best. That deep-hidden best that never had been permitted a single bloom under the bars and irons where he fought for sustenance. What streams of active beauty would flow into time!

Fielding Burke, in "Call Home the Heart." (Longmans, Green

New York Times Donald Adams
Feb 10th 46 - [illegible]

Treasure Chest

Only copy 1922 (2) Boston

LITERATURE

New Poems and Their Author

ALICE STONE BLACKWELL

In her latest volume, *Lute and Furrow*,* Olive Tilford Dargan succeeds in making poetry out of the very texture of life,—poetry which is, as a reviewer in the New York *World* calls it, "truly human song." As regards substance and subject, these poems are most varied in scope; and in form they range from perfect classicism to the unrhymed measures with which her contemporaries have made us familiar; but whatever the form or the matter, they do not fail to give one the feeling that behind them is a "spirit of beauty, walking true."

The title of the book reflects the fact that she can sing as she works. On her mountain acres in North Carolina she lives in close sympathy with her tenants, and in real contact with problems of the soil. Yet she is a woman of cosmopolitan leanings. London and antipodal Paris seem to her as home. She went to Westmoreland for one week's stay, and lingered ten months because the moors and fells and the "guid North folk" were of her own life. Hurrying through Hampshire, she was long delayed by the deep woods and sweet waters that seemed a part of her ancestral portion. And probably they are, for her family name is recurrent there. In Wales she found again her Carolina hills and laurels, richer for "sea-glimpses to rest on," and "traces of Shelley for breathless treading." China

In *Lute and Furrow* the two most intense qualities of her nature are vividly apparent, a keen response, both faun-like and mystical, to all natural beauty, and a deep sensitiveness to the heroism manifested in the struggle to make this a better world. But in looking over the record of her work, one concludes that her interests are multifold. In an early play, *The Shepherd*, there is depicted the power that lies in man's love for man, and a non-resistance as complete as that of Gandhi himself. Still earlier, in *The Poet*, she wrote of the sufferings and mistakes of genius, taking Poe as her type. There is also a play of the Cœur d'Alene country when labor troubles shook that region; and two plays with the scenes laid in the Southern Highlands, one of them dealing with the injustice arising from the ownership of a vast natural resource, and the other revealing the sensitive soul of a mountain woman, strong but bewildered and finally defeated. In *The Flutter of the Gold Leaf*, a one-act play written in collaboration with Dr. Frederic Peterson, she shows her strong sympathy with those who tread the psychic borderland; and another play in this volume, *The Journey*, leads toward international unity, taking for its dramatic highlight one of the sacrificial steps by which the painful progress is made.

These plays are all in prose; but eight other dramas are poetic in form as well as essence. In *Semiramis* the choice between love and power is magnificently elaborated; *Carlotta* shows the yet unended struggle for liberty in Mexico as it temporarily triumphed under the leadership of Benito Juarez. The last act of this play was pronounced by John White Chadwick to be "the highest point in tragic drama achieved since Shakespeare." And *Kidmir*, bathed and fibered with beauty, must rank with *Carlotta* in power. Though it stages a conflict between the East and the West in the time of the Crusades, it is lifted above period and set in the heart of mankind. *A Son of Hermes* is a comedy in which a strenuous Spartan maiden captures the heart of the most nonchalant gallant in Athens, with uniquely humorous results. The very intricate plot comes to a brilliant *dénouement*, and the poetic quality is glowingly sustained. *The Siege* is a play of old Syracuse, and the protagonist is no less than Plato, who, on a visit to Sicily at the call of Dionysius, finds a rival to philosophy in the love of a woman. The passion that breaks from him when his serenity is at last overwhelmed is lit and shaped with true poetic fire. *Lords and Lovers* is a play revolving about Henry the Third, in his beautiful youth, before the counsel of the wise Pembroke was forgotten. When it appeared, James Huneker, in the *North American Review*, wrote of the author as indubitably a poet, who spoke blank verse as her mother tongue. In *The Mortal Gods* Mrs. Dargan returns to the Mexican theme, bringing it to our date and door. The heroine of this play, bred in blind luxury, awakes to her part and meaning in life, and goes to share the condition of the lowest peons, teaching them the way out of bondage. The earth-wide spirit advancing to liberation glows so strongly in this play that Charlotte Despard, in her London paper, *The Vote*, made of it a leading article entitled "A Play of Victory"; finding in it an ideal going beyond the day of mere ballot-casting to that of illumined social reconstruction.

V.A.C.

brant with the writer's passionate sympathy for the suffering and the inequalities behind the social unrest seething among the workers of the world.

There is much incisive satire. "With her little feet rooted in aristocratic ground, she could safely sway and sniff toward the questionable area of humanity."

"Of course you are joking, Professor, about this country being a democracy. And as for their thirty most powerful (who control the government of the United States) being also wise, do you know what is their chief trouble at this minute? What is making them lose sleep, swear behind their teeth and lift eyes like puzzled sheep? It is the fact that they have made such a chaotic mess of affairs that their business needs another war, when with all their desperate preparation and scare mongery they are unable to supply it." And again:—"To me religion means securing for man the finest adjustment possible to the universe in which he must live—Can a religion that accepts war and poverty the two immediate dragons in the way of that finest adjustment of man to his universe—can such a religion be sincerely upheld by any man capable of logical thought?"

Fielding Burke is also a poet. Like Sidney and Lodge among her sixteenth century fore-bears, she has scattered through her novels, ballads and other snatches of verse. She has given us a "close-up" of the minstrel at work—of the whole process from the inciting incident to the finished song. But best of all are the exquisite imagery and inimitable phrasing in her prose passages. "Ishma's voice was steady . . ., but its mellow depth was gone, and it flamed around a core of iron. No longer water dripping in dark woods, holding something fragrant and hidden." "But here was this woman, like a well-preened vulture, on the field of actual battle, poking curiously about for titillating pick-ups."

"CALL HOME THE HEART" has

the conventional fundamentals of great literature: elevated theme, correct form, appropriate and chaste style. It has much humor to relieve the serious and tragic. It has breadth, depth, beauty. If it be true, as one critic avers, that the book is not great, no careful reader can deny that it is unquestionably "near-great."

Morning Advertiser
LONDON

BOOKS AND OTHER THINGS

A Mountain Girl's Story

3152

IT IS AN ABSORBING STORY which Fielding Burke tells in "Call Home the Heart" (Longmans, 7s. 6d. net). Ishma was the youngest child of Marshall and Laviny Waycaster, whose home was in the mountains in the southern part of America. Before she was seven years old she had become the Cinderella of the family on the worn-out farm, and the only relief she got was on Sundays, when she went off to a solitary beauty spot in the mountain and dreamed dreams, and the other members of the family could not understand her. "She asked so little of life, she thought. That was her great accusation. So little of life; when, in fact, she was asking for more than life has ever given to anyone; an understanding of life itself. In her early years, Ishma had rested sanely on her love of beauty in nature, her unthinking union with it. . . . A storm on Cloudy Knob would leave her feeling that she had taken a breath as deep as her being. Wind, curving about a ridge of silver poplars, could sweep life clean. With adolescence, beauty was not enough. Nature made her lonely, hungry, impatient. An exquisite denial of sensuous adequacy became her torture. Then Britt had entered, overwhelming, undeniable, restoring. Being was again complete. But for how long?" Then came lovers and she married a neighbour, Britt. Children came, and the cares and worries of the hard life seem to kill her love for her husband, and, [illegible] beyond endurance, she forsakes him for Ra[illegible] old acquaintance, who really was nothing [illegible] her, and goes to live with him among the squalid streets and long hours of work in an industrial town. Yet here she was still dissatisfied and still sought an understanding of life vainly. At last, she breaks away and returns to the mountains and Britt, who welcomes her, and she finds at least something more than a hint of that for which she had been seeking. A notable book.

Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, Mass.

Dec. 4th 35

E ASHEVILLE CITIZEN, ASHEVILLE, N. C.,

MRS. DARGAN'S NEW NOVEL

Writing in the New York Times of Monday, John Chamberlain, book reviewer for that newspaper, devotes his entire column to "A Stone Came Rolling," the new novel by "Fielding Burke," the pen name of Mrs. Clive Tilford Dargan, of West Asheville.

"What distinguishes 'A Stone Came Rolling' from lesser strike novels," says Mr. Chamberlain, in a review which is highly appreciative throughout, "is its understanding of the conflicting motives of a whole community. Fielding Burke—or Olive Tilford Dargan, as she used to be known when she wrote lyric poetry for the quality magazines—does not divide her people into sheep and goats; she takes them in all their inevitable graduations.

"Religion, jealousy, personal hatreds and curiosity all play their conditioning roles in a novel whose dramatic axis is the conflict of capital and labor in a region that has lagged behind the rest of the country in unionization and in the granting or wresting of social services through factory legislation."

Remarking that the people in "A Stone Came Rolling" are the same sort of people that appear in Ellen Glasgow's "Vein of Iron," Mr. Chamberlain thinks that "a quarrel is certain to rage over the respective merits of Miss Burke's approach and Miss Glasgow's." His own view is that "Miss Burke's sense of the issues involved is probably clearer than Miss Glasgow's," yet he adds that "each novel impresses one with its truth," closing with the suggestion that "if a reader will take 'Vein of Iron' and 'A Stone Came Rolling' as complementary, he will be making the first step toward understanding the bewildering complexity of the American scene."

Mrs. O. T. Dargan

HENRY
ROMEIKE, Inc.
(ORIGINAL)
106-110 SEVENTH AVE.
NEW YORK
Established 1881
FROM
MAR 11 1922
EVE. POST
NEW YORK CITY

DRAMA

"THE FLUTTER OF THE GOLD LEAF AND OTHER PLAYS." By OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN and FREDERICK PETERSON. Scribner's. 1922. $1.50.

The four one-act plays in this volume are all of delicate and fine feeling, but vary in dramatic workmanship. Dr. Peterson, the psychiatrist, is evidently not so good a dramatist as Mrs. Dargan, the poet. "Two Doctors at Akragas," which he contributes alone, is not a play, but a thesis on the supremacy of mind over matter. "Everychild," for which he is named as first collaborator, a position given usually to the one who formulates the basic idea of a play, is acknowledged by the authors as not a play, but a pageant, and is a bit of special pleading for the rights of childhood to happiness and joy. As such it well suits its purpose. In the title play, the longest in the book, Mrs. Dargan occupies the position of first collaborator, and dramatic interest is here more sustained, even though the play commits the fatal error of having a theme to which the plot does not bear witness. The intellectual sympathy which the playwrights desire to evoke for the young idealist who seeks to discover the hidden secrets of nature is deflected by the human emotional sympathy for the lovely girl, his sweetheart, whom he strangles, notwithstanding the fact that he is provoked to the deed by her seemingly ruthless destruction of his invention. "The Journey," by Mrs. Dargan alone, is by far the best thing in the collection. Exquisite in poetic imagery, clearly visualized, and legitimately dramatic, it utilizes the material of "New China," and tells the pathetic story of a young Chinese bride, whose family is of the old régime, who stabs herself rather than be the lure to keep her husband from his patriotic work for the soul and life of the new democracy. The plays are in prose, with occasional lyrics.

Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, Mass.

August 3, 1932.

Longmans, Green and Company, Publishers,

New York City:

I am delighted to hear that there is to be an English edition of "Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke. It seems to me one of the greatest stories of modern times, and absolutely unique in character.

Yours sincerely,

Abbie Stone Blackwell.

International Press-Cutting Bureau,
110, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

Extract from
Natal Mercury
Durban, S.A.

21 MAY 1932

COURAGE AND LONGING

CALL HOME THE HEART, by Fielding Burke. London: Longmans, Green & Co. Published price, 7/6 net.

Were it not for the courage that Ishmalee brought to her life she would never have survived, spiritually, the years of deadening labour on the worn-out mountain farm which had to support too many people. That courage of hers was renewed when she could leave behind her the cares of the family and roam among the hilltops of Cloudy Knob and rest on the brink of the waterfall's pool.

It was said of Ishmalee that she would always be pulling at the world, trying to get it into shape. It was seeking that elusive meaning to life that made her struggle, after her marriage to Britt, to improve the poverty-stricken home in which she, her husband, children, her mother, sister, brother-in-law and eight children existed, not having known anything better. But some vague instinct in Ishmalee would not let her give up that attempt at reformation of slipshod ways. Life was a constant struggle for existence and when tragedy, bitter hopelessness defeated her she exchanged that troublesome existence with Britt, whom she loved, for life with Rad, who was nothing to her.

The years in Winbury with Rad blurred her memories of Cloudy Knob, although she longed with the intensity of the mountain born for the high hills and the cold, crystal springs that were but as vanished dreams in the squalid streets of the mill town. Those years of bitterness were made bearable because Ishmalee spent herself for the weary, hopeless, worksodden people around her—spending her strength and her scanty cash as she had propped her shiftless brother-in-law and her sister with their big brood of children.

The hypocrisy of vaunted freedom, liberty, uplift and justice of democracy are exposed in the chapters of Winbury life.

It is with a sense of relieved tension that the story takes the reader back to the mountains with Ishmalee who still sought that elusive purpose of life, finding it, at last, in the wideness of the earth and the closer love of her husband.

Bluebonnet Lodge in the big snow of Feb-1937 1937





TIMES
Chattanooga, Tenn.
FEB 26 1932

"CALL HOME THE HEART."

By Fielding Burke.....Longmans-Green

IN this most stirring first novel Fielding Burke has drawn a picture of the Carolina mountains which for real beauty and sincere passion must be conspicuous in this spring's list of splendid novels.

It is the story of Ishma and of her loves, the love for Cloudy knob, of Dark ridge, for mountain wood fires flaming against black skies and turning the trees and rocks to molten gold and copper, for that remarkable character of old Granny—direct, outspoken, indomitable and keen, for humanity as seen in the factory workers of the mill town, and, above all, of her love for Britt, the red-headed ballad maker who turned from his "shiftless, no-ercount" ways to toil for her, and whose adoration runs like a scarlet thread of passionate beauty throughout the long story of Ishma's struggles and adjustments.

It is the story of a people who, found in whatsoever part of the world they may be, have ever a yearning for the mountains, and whose hearts feel the call of home so strongly that in their last breaths they speak of it longingly. It is the story of an economic struggle, of strikes and factory owners, of the surging tide of human fate which sweeps before it the weak, the ignorant and the economically dependent.

Throughout the pages of the somewhat long and at times intensely dramatic tale, there moves the almost symbolic figure of Ishma, purposeful, steadfast and with burning desire to become a significant part of life around her. Without doubt, the best parts of the book are the mountain scenes. Where natural beauty, characteristic manners and a quaintness of speech and song lend color to a setting of which the central figure is indigenous, there must naturally be a more harmonious effect than when the same character is moved to a strange environment. Yet the chapters which depict Ishma mingling with the mill workers, struggling with their problems as well as her own, are extremely fascinating from a less personal point of view.

"Call Home the Heart" is an epic of strength and beauty and one which must make any reader hope for further writing from the same author. Dealing as it does with a people who are in the process of an almost inevitable amalgamation, it encounters difficulties with which only a writer of insight could cope adequately. Particularly those of us who live in manufacturing towns must find "Call Home the Heart" a book which will make for a deeper understanding of a large part of our immediate population.—C. N. G.

young Northern doctor, who feeds her hungry mind from his own library, and finally through the violence of a strike among the mill-workers in which she aids the communist leaders, Ishma wins the knowledge of life for which she has yearned. Then, suddenly convinced that Britt and the mountains own her heart, she flees in dismay to them and her now sturdy young son. On him will fall her mantle in fighting the cause of oppressed humanity.

Not only through Ishma and her adventures is the intimate analysis of the mountain folk presented. The story moves slowly, and, as in an epic, it is the wealth of minute detail woven into the crowded tapestry that makes the picture powerful. The sordid, stolid daily life on the farm is contrasted with the wild, alluring beauty of the enveloping mountains. Together they symbolize and explain the duel Ishma-lee. Only close personal contact and deep human insight on the part of the author could have made these throb through the book as they do. The scenes in the mill-town are somewhat vaguer, but these too are vi-

Six pages forward

Every person in the book is actual, alive. The last chapter should bring understanding to women who wish to combine two desires, individual and universal love.—E. W. L.

TENNESSEE

From the very beginning Ishma took possession of me. You've made me know mountain people.—F. S.

TEXAS

People who read it will stop and ponder. I hope millions of copies will be sold.—Van K. B.

OKLAHOMA

"Call Home the Heart" has meant more to me than I can ever express. I have asked the privilege of presenting it to my Study Club in October and shall endeavor to inspire a desire on the part of each of them to read, study and love the book, too.—L. C.

NORTH CAROLINA

I believe you will be justified in going any lengths to get "Call Home the Heart" before the English-speaking world. All lovers of real literature ought to hail the advent of such a writer.—S. P. V.

*From unsolicited letters which have come to the publishers.

There will be few novels written in 1932 in so rich a spirit or about so moving a theme.—*Jonathan Daniels.*

HEART

A story of compelling reality. Vigorous and appealing. . . . an exceptionally good novel.—*New York Times.*

BY FIELDING BURKE

Feet to walk with . . . hands to work with . . . all the mountain folks had those. But Ishma had more, and in abundance—a heart rich in compassion, a mind restless with energy—dreams that held pity for all the world. Read her story in the best reviewed novel of the year. $2.50

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Eve Transcript
Boston
Mass DEC 21 1935

Hard Times in North Carolina

THE harrowing, dreary pre-election days of 1932 have been resurrected for us by Fielding Burke in his second novel, "A Stone Came Rolling," which continues from where he left off in "Call Home the Heart." The thought of those nightmarish days of 1932, the darkest of this present era of pandemonium, pervades one with a feeling of numb despair and the reader is reluctantly inveigled again into viewing the hopelessness of that particular year. Nevertheless, the problem that Mr. Burke deals with, that of the social struggles between the oppressed and the oppressors, is still poignant and still unsolved.

Mr. Burke sets his stage in Dunmow, a manufacturing city in North Carolina, although any stage would do. Ishma Hensley is the dominating figure throughout the book. She is a woman of strong vision and intelligence, one of those rare persons who can remain above the struggle and yet be in it. She dedicates her life to the cause of humanity, the freedom of the oppressed. Her course is littered with stumbling blocks and every ounce of her vision, intelligence and emotion is needed to keep her from succumbing to defeat. She is more of a vibrant force than a person in a community riddled by starvation and poverty.

The large array of characters seem to be representations of factors and forces in society rather than real people. There is Britt Hensley, Ishma's husband, a man of the soil and Ned, their son who contains the best qualities of both. The sheer goodness of the Hensleys seems a little unreal at times. The author gets to the very bottom of things in Emberson Lodge and displays the starkness of the opposing factors in the lives of Bly Emberson, his wife Verna, and their three children. There is Dr. Unthank, hopelessly in love with Ishma, ever present at all crucial moments and having an insufferable understanding of all people, their innermost emotions and thoughts. The workers, the farmers, and the townspeople contribute a colorful back-drop to the panorama.

The story is mainly concerned with the textile strikers and their attempts for liberty and life. There are walk-outs, mass meetings, street brawls, injuries and a few deaths. The strikers are subdued after the first outbreak, but the sensation of mass power has been awakened and plans go steadily forward for a greater and more concerted effort. A march to the state capitol is planned. The second strike is more riotous with bayonets and machine guns used to quell the stampede but such force only goads the workers into their final triumph of sacking the jail. Mr. Burke rather forcefully shows up the losing battle religion is fighting in the face of privation and oppression. There are incidental views of the more personal and emotional side of the Dunmow people which provides a much needed relief.

The magnitude and scope of Mr. Burke's theme is so large that he becomes lost in it. The problem as yet is one that has only been solved in theory. It is easy to start off with the premiss that the present economic system is hopelessly unfair and inequitable to the majority. But stating such a fact is not enough for Mr. Burke and through Ishma his vision portrays a paradise on earth for humanity, but he falters hopelessly when it comes to methods of attaining it.

E. R.

A Stone Came Rolling. By Fielding Burke. $2.50. New York: Longmans, Green and Company.

NEWS
Charlotte, N. C.

MAR 13 1932

Calls Home The Heart To Carolina Mountains

New Native Author Writes With "Savage Directness And Rare Beauty."

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke Longmans, Green. $2.50. 430 pp.

Reviewed by Loretto Carroll Bailey.

"Call Home the Heart" is a book about North Carolina, written from the "inside." The first half of the book deals with mountain people, the second half with mill people—a— return to the mountains furnishing an ending happy enough to suit the most exacting tastes.

For Ishma, the heroine, having deserted her husband and the hopeless drudgery of her mountain existence for the glamor of a mill village, returns to the mountains and her first love, having acquired meanwhile a knowledge of Karl Marx and birth control. There she finds her mountain home prospering and blossoming, the husband waiting on the doorstep. He, she learns, has been given the start necessary to build up the farm by playing mountain ballads for phonograph recording. The two are reunited, and Ishma finds that home for her must forever be the mountains, although she realizes (as does the author in a finely phrased paragraph) that, when she deserts the struggling masses of the mills, who are trying to organize, she is running away from a larger life of service to humanity. Her cup is full, but it is not, she tells herself, the sea.

The first half of the book follows the heroine faithfully through her search int he mountains that are her home for some meaning and purpose in life, and the story is not marred even by the author's fearful determination to tell every mountain story and sing every ballad he knows. He knows his mountain people and draws them with fine humor and sympathy, so that one can readily forgive him if his story behaves sometimes like a musical-comedy movie, wherein the dramatic action pauses at any time to allow the hero to sing the theme song.

Account Of Strike

The second half of the book is a bewildering gallery of mill-village pictures. Here is an account of a strike (strongly suggestive of that in Gastonia) with plenty of background for the trouble and with portraits of several prominent figures. A character whose original appears to have been Mary Heaton Vorse, author of "Strike," relieves the author of a good bit of mental irritation.

The book is reminiscent of DuBose Heyward's "Angel;" like the leading characters of that mountain epic, Mr. Burke's hero and heroine often show movie influence—but Mr. Burke is far truer to his mountains than Mr. Heyward. As in Robert's "The Time of Man," the poor white is unforgettably pictured, but the author of "Call Home the Heart" has not the power to sustain his narrative, to build up the cumulative effects achieved by Elizabeth Madox Roberts. His interests are too diverse—he knows so much about what he writes that he cannot bear to throw anything away. Even as one's sympathies go out to his characters, one cannot help wishing that he had made not one book but several of his material. Sometimes the book achieves the lyric quality of Maristan Chapman's "The Happy Mountain," but it does not, like that work, consistently idealize and romanticize the mountaineer. Mr. Burke's book, borrowing nothing from all of these books, is reminiscent of all of them.

In "Call Home the Heart" we have one more sincere interpretation of North Carolina that should interest any North Carolinian—and probably will interest a few, since it has been praised by the New York Times. However much one might wish that sincerity and art were better friends in North Carolina, we must pay tribute to this book which sometimes moves, as the publishers describe, it with "savage directness and rare beauty."

of Mexico. This work had received enough eoniums to turn a young writer's head, but Mrs. Dargan only said quietly that she could "do better than that." All she needed was quiet and freedom on the high ridge farm, overlooking the Nantahala and Little Tennessee, which the couple had enthusiastically acquired. John White Chadwick had written of "Carlotta" that it "marked the high tide in blank verse since Shakespeare" and that was encouragement enough. She could go on. Her second book, "Lords and Lovers," scored even higher with critics and the author still thinks of it as her best. It contained a double play in blank verse, each part a five act drama complete in itself, with the two parts making one dramatic whole, a feat which excited much admiration among the reviewers. There was also a prose play in the book, portraying a fragment of the Russian Revolution of 1905, with a Tolstoyan non-resistant as the protagonist. (Shades of Gandhi!) This play had a varied fortune. It was bought for production by Sothern and Marlowe, but not put on. Sothern's friend, Sir Henry Irving, had a son who came along with a play on the same subject, and professional as well as friendly loyalty required that Mrs. Dargan's play give place to Irving's. When the Irving play failed, Mrs. Dargan was too nice to chuckle. In the meantime, Aline Bernstein had purchased the rights to the Dargan play, then for some reason gave up Broadway for California and a domestic life. The play, though unproduced, was making money. A third purchaser appeared, Bertha Kalich, a very fine actress, but she wanted to dress as a boy and stroll through the play as the romantic young violinist, to which Mrs. Dargan would not agree. Mrs. Dargan learned later that Julia Marlowe had planned to do the same thing. The play was finally given as the first offering of the Neighborhood Playhouse, launching that fine venture of Alice and Irene Lewisohn on its years of success. Sarah Cowell LeMoyne, directed the play and wrote to Mrs. Dargan, then in England, "There was not room on the lower east side for all the uptown limousines."

After the death of her husband, Mrs. Dargan undertook to carry on farm operations with the help of her three tenant families. Making a ridge farm decently support more than a score of people required the work of all hands including her own. The "views" were fine, but production demanded something less immaterial. The work absorbed her al-

JOURNA
Providence
FEB 21 1932

Ground-Folk

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.50.

HERE is a story of the Carolina mountain people—people poverty-stricken and remote; strange in habit of speech and in mode of living. Ishma is one of them, but superior to most, being desirous of something finer than the harsh life of the mountain women. Britt, whom she marries, is likewise courageous and progressive, but his roots are in the soil of his native hills, while to Ishma the outside world speaks insistently. Before the birth of her third child she escapes with Rad, and goes to live with him in a shabby mill village that soon dispels her dreams of the "big happy world."

With an ardour that seldom deserts her, Ishma enlists herself on the side of the mill-workers in their fight against oppression. She allies herself with the Communist cause as a means of relieving their distress, but though she works bravely and well, she is uncertain of ultimate success. A sudden crisis reveals what she feels to be an unforgivable weakness, and she flees back to her mountains—and to Britt.

Mr. Burke is a new writer, and there are evidences of newness in his work. Chief among them is a lack of complete motivation for the actions of his heroine, which considerably mars the effectiveness of her adventurings. There is, too, an unfortunate Hardy-like straining of circumstance in the author's devices to clear Ishma's path whenever obstacles become too vast and complicated. As for the problem of Communism, which arises in the latter portion of the book, it is left completely unsolved. Mr. Burke has learned the value of restraint in writing, but occasionally he abuses it by blurring the outlines of his climaxes with a touch too hasty and light. The result is, unhappliy, frequent bewilderment for the reader, and a weakening of the novel as a whole.

Mr. Burke, in spite of such weaknesses, has nevertheless attained in his novel the same sort of epic power that one finds in Rolvaag's Giants in the Earth. He does for the mountaineers and the mill-workers what Rolvaag did for the prairie pioneers. The rigours of mountain life become terrifyingly real—a symbol of human struggle against superhuman odds. The trails of the mill people become actual tragedy—a part of the tragedy of class-struggle throughout the world.

S. B. H.

most to the exclusion of writing, but she liked it. Today she looks with more pride on her record as a genuine "dirt farmer" than the fact that she wrote blank verse which made the dean of American critics hail her as "A new poet! There is hardly a page from which some mellow conceit, some melodic jewel, informed with the crossed-fires of a singularly opulent imagination cannot be culled."

But farming took its toll. For some years she wrote nothing that demanded long periods of concentration. Lyrics, however, continued to bubble and found a welcome in Scribners, the Century, Atlantic and McClure's, sometimes at the generous rate of a hundred dollars a poem. For a rather lengthy dramatic poem, the Century paid the topnitch price of two hundred and fifty dollars which was immediately applied to the beloved but ravenous farm. She shared all the hardships and pleasures of the little ridge colony and lost her old literary perspective. Plato, in his Sicilian days, chronicled in one of her five-act verse plays, did not seem so important as old gran'pap, the head of the farm clan. She had gone into the highlands, with a vow never to write about the people, but with her easy adaptability she became so much a part of the life that she felt she could write of it with no reproachful sense of exploitation. The frailties and nobilities of her neighbors were of the same human brand found the world over, with the hovering charm of earlier centuries added. To capture this before it passed from life under the wheels of progress, became a fascinating stunt.

Aiming high, she sent her first sketch to the Atlantic. It was eagerly accepted, and more sketches were asked for than she could supply, but every now and then when the farm purse was skin empty, she would send one in. These sketches, first published as a collection under the title "Highland Annals" have recently been "streamlined" by the author, illustrated by Bayard Wooten, and re-issued under the title from one of her own poems, "From My Highest Hill".

Early Good Neighbor

Mrs. Dargan's once unladylike interest in politics has ~~given~~ imparted to her an almost prophetic sense of what is to come. She wrote a play on the Mexican Revolution of 1910, called "The Mortal Gods" in blank verse, but she says "the new wine did not go well in the old bottles" for "propaganda in art had not at that time found a place in the hearts of publishers" and "American critics turned a cautiously deaf ear to the book." But in England, it was another story. Charlotte Despard, the famous sister of Marshal French, Chief of the British army, was leader of the woman's movement then raging in London. She spread a review of the play over the entire front page of her newspaper, "The Vote," and entitled it "Victors of Tomorrow". Now that the erstwhile revolutionaries of Mexico have become the Victors of Today, Mrs. Dargan may reflect with pleasure that her early offering made "The Good Neighbor Policy" a bit easier when it was adopted as a fundamental doctrine of our government.

But no American could look on Mexico's difficulties without seeing our own, and Mrs. Dargan had started thinking about Labor's place in the world long before there was any National Labor Relations Board, or other "Bill of Rights" for Labor. As a young girl, she ~~had~~ Henry George, on his last round of lectures, and Single Tax had opened a new gate to thousands of paths yet untrod even in thought. One of them led, in the mind of this creative artist to "Call Home the Heart", a novel published here and in England, which earned the Maxim Gorky award in 1932. It dealt with the vanguard of the Labor movement and was, in fulfillment of her old plan, an artistic achievement as well as a masterpiece of propaganda. One of her critics called it a "Proletarian Novel in Lyrical Prose". It was followed by "A Stone Came Rolling", which seemed to many a novel of even greater merit.

We have mentioned only a few of Mrs. Dargan's works, any one of which would have made her a celebrity. Naturally, she has come in contact with many literary celebrities and made friends among them, but their names come only rarely and incidentally in her conversation. As a celebrity herself, she considers that she is disqualified and ignores all requests to be entered in the various "Who's Who's" that break out all over the country. She respects "Who's Who in America" as a useful institution, but it was only after years of solicitation that she gave the necessary data. "If I have done anything of record," she says, "time will take care of it after I am dead, and if I haven't, time will take care of that, too."

A kind heart and the demands it makes upon her time are the worst enemies of this artist. A few hours stolen from her, are perhaps a few chapters from a book that will help the world, after its shaking, to settle into a foundation that will mean a surer base for happiness for all of us.

OLIVE DARGAN'S NOVELS WRITTEN IN RUSTIC HOME

Authoress Has Workshop In Picturesque House Here

"Well, we have come to see Mrs. Daniel Boone!"

Friends of Olive Tilford Dargan, noted authoress and poet, jokingly greeted her in this manner when she first bought her rustic home on Balsam avenue in West Asheville. Then, the little mountain home, which has an interesting story of its own, had just passed into the hands of the new owner and was in need of repairs.

Was Pioneer Log Cabin

Bluebonnet lodge, as the writer has named her home, is a charming house at the end of Balsam avenue. The original portion of the home was a pioneer one-room log cabin which is said to be the oldest house yet standing within the city limits.

The one-room cabin came into prominence some years ago Rutherford P. Hayes, son of the nineteenth president of the United States, converted it into a comfortable rustic home for his aunt, who lived here awhile. The president's son, who came to Asheville early in 1900 for his health, remained here about 20 years.

On a ride while visiting in Asheville in 1925, Mrs. Dargan saw the little rustic home. Plans to go to England to reside were given up, for the little home under the two large pine trees seemed so restful that it made Great Britain appear rather formidable, she said.

She bought the place to make sure that she would return, and then after a few months' trip abroad she came to Asheville in 1925 to make her home. The old pioneer chimney is still standing and two more chimneys were added. She made the little home comfortable with improvements and added to its picturesqueness with two small balconies, one on the east side and the other on the west side.

Surrounded By Greenery

Bluebonnet lodge is surrounded by a wealth of greenery, including trumpet vines over the chimney, clementis, boxwoods, rhododendron, kalmia and masses of forsythia which practically conceal the rear of the house. Most of the expansive lawn is shaded by large pine trees, and not far away from the home beside a wooded path one finds the spring from which the pioneer occupants of the cabin obtained their water. On the grounds are pear and apple trees, the latter being especially popular with small boys in the neighborhood. The youngsters know that they may have the apples that fall on the ground and they also know that the good-natured writer will turn her back so that they may get others. The writer has a charming out-of-doors studio which she converted from the stable on the grounds.

It is in this setting that Mrs. Dargan has her workshop. It was here she produced "Call Home the Heart" popular novel of three years ago, and "A Stone Came Rolling," her newest book which will come out this fall with Longman, Green and Company as publishers.

THE NEWS PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK



MRS. OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN

By DORCAS CARLAND

"Will you loan me a piece of butter, Mrs. Dargan, please?" asked a [illegible] coming into the kitchen [illegible] fast. "I haven't been able [illegible] we Tommy long enough [illegible] none."

While Mrs. Darga[illegible] the butter, she asked ho[illegible] was that morning and [illegible] an orange for him. She [illegible] tell me, but I learned late[illegible] she had sat up most of the [illegible] with Tommy when he [illegible]

That, I learned, was how she spends much of her time, being a good neighbor to those who need her. Mrs. Dargan stays and works most of the time in her charming log cabin home in West Asheville and occasionally fre-

quents the summit of Spivey Mountain for inspiration.

Sometimes, she manages to squeeze in a few minutes or even weeks to write a book, but not enough to satisfy the thousands who have read and loved her work. "You seem able to write anything you care to write," wrote Scribners, her publisher, "Why do you stand on the sill of the Pantheon? A little more application and you will be on the inside with the immortals." But she is willing to pass up even that boon in order to feed the hungry, counsel the doubtful, help the innocent get out of jail, or nurse the sick.

Immortal she is, however, on the strength of even one book, but her readers often feel that they need her just as much as her neighbors can. They need her vision, when the world is swirling so fast that it seems to have lost direction. They can lean on her perception, which seems to be based on the eternal verities and pierces the clouds of dust that all but engulf them. She is contemporary, up to the minute, and even looking into the future, but the understanding that illuminates her work, is of the ages and ageless.

Mrs. Dargan, to her neighbors, was born Olive Tilford, daughter of a father "Who was always suspecting that Eldorado lay over the next border." They moved first from her birthplace in Kentucky, to Missouri. "Both parents, teachers and civic minded" began building a high school in that state, but her mother's health failed, and "the family crossed the Arkansas line into the Ozark foothills, where they found high and healthful ground, but did not save the mother's life." Here Professor Tilford founded a prosperous academy, with precocious Olive, then thirteen, as an as-

Continued from page one

sistant. At fourteen, she was teaching on her own and two years later entered Peabody College for teachers, in Nashville. After graduation and a time of teaching in San Antonio, Texas, she went to Radcliffe College, Cambridge, where she met Pegram Dargan, a young South Carolinian in his senior year at Harvard."

Long before she had begun to grow up, Olive had seen sorrow and suffering, and she began early to ask "What's the matter with the world?" At twelve, she tried to persuade her father to "do something" to improve the condition of prisoners. When he did not, for reasons that must be clear to most fathers, she decided she would have to learn to do that herself. Much as she enjoyed learning philosophy at Radcliffe from George Santayana, she found Political Economy " a barren experience, giving no answer to the burning question." Now, Political Economy was not a polite subject for ladies to study, even in the twenties, and it must have been a shock to all right-thinking people to see a young lady straining her mind with such a masculine preoccupation before the World War. But Olive Tilford already had a high purpose, and a determination that carried her through. She learned that reformists are not always popular, but artists, if successful, are apt to be. She decided to become such a literary artist that her work would be read by all. Then, with consummate skill, she would make the world ashamed of its crimes ,and cause humanity to "Shatter the sorry scheme of things entire and remold it nearer heart's desire." Marriage, she saw, would take up a lot of time better spent in writing to accomplish her modest objective, and when she left Boston to teach in Nova Scotia, she left four suitors behind her, with no forwarding address.

But because she was satisfied with nothing short of perfection in her teaching, that took too much time, too, and she returned to Boston to be a stenographer. There, in search of a bust of Keats, she went to an old curiosity shop where she met Pegram Dargan, who was looking for a statue of Venus. Neither of them found the statues, but he must have found his Venus, for when she moved to Blue Ridge, Georgia, he followed her and "camped on the doorstep" until she found her poet and married him.

The couple went to New York City, "where they lived high up in a little apartment with six windows toward the Hudson and wasted a lot of time writing sonnets to sunsets over the Palisades. In the seventh year of marriage, they discovered the mountains of Western North Carolina and modestly wanted one for themselves, feeling that here amid so much beauty it would be easy to live poetry as well as write it. Optimists indeed!" according to Mrs. Dargan.

Before leaving New York, Mrs. Dargan had published her first book, containing with two others the poetic drama, "Carlotta," written about the ill-starred Empress

Noted Writer At Her Home Here



Olive Tilford Dargan, noted writer, is shown above standing in front of her charming home, Bluebonnet lodge, on Balsam avenue, West Asheville. Much of the home is hidden by greenery and a small balcony adds a picturesque touch.

Mrs. Dargan's New Book Based On Social Theme

Says Novel Deals With Coming Changes In Economic Life

Action of "A Stone Came Rolling," Olive Tilford Dargan's newest book which will appear this fall, takes place almost entirely in the Piedmont region, Mrs. Dragan said yesterday.

"Of course, I couldn't keep away from my beloved ground entirely and there are one or two scenes laid in the highlands," the author said. Her home is on Balsam avenue, West Asheville.

The new book contains a greater number of outstanding characters than were featured in "Call Home the Heart," Mrs. Dargan's novel which received much praise three years ago, and "more complex interaction of social strata—if one can speak of that in a society only a century or two

removed from the pioneer stage," the author commented.

Mrs. Dargan expects to receive proofs on "A Stone Came Rolling" shortly. Yesterday she had one of the attractive jacket designs which will be used, and the announcement terms it "a story of America at the crossroads surging beyond mere personal life into drama of deep social import." The new book will appear under the pen name of Fielding Burke under which "Call Home the Heart" was also written.

The writer is now preparing additions for a new edition of "Highland Annals," and she expects to go to Graham and Swain counties to obtain pictures of mountain life for illustration. Next, she plans a volume of poetry.

"Does 'A Stone Came Rolling' lean more to propaganda than art?" Mrs. Dargan was asked.

"I suppose that would depend upon the psychology of the reader," she answered. "King Lear could once have been called propaganda for a better society with its plea for mercy, charity and a wiser solution of family troubles, but no one thinks of it now except as a work of art. It will be some years before books based upon the social viewpoint can escape the taint of propaganda but in the new book I have tried to avoid the 'Call Home the Heart.'

"The leading character is a highly regarded mill owner. I hope that my readers will find that I have followed his trials sympathetically and with genuine affection. I fell that the characters are of every-day life, and blood. If I didn't feel their blood-beat, I could not write about them."

Concerns Social Change

Mrs. Dragon was asked whether the main thesis of the new book is much the same as in "Call Home the Heart."

"Yes, it concerns the coming social change which will remove the human drudge from society by the innovation of machinery collectively owned and release man entirely from the tyranny of ideals connected with financial success," she replied.

Asked the usual question as to whether the social change would be a bloodless one, Mrs. Dargan answered that she thought the matter of bloodshed rested with the 30,000,000 people of the middle class. "If they awake to the fact that their destiny and interests are with the many millions in the lower classes and refuse to align themselves any longer with the 10 per cent entrenched above them, we shall get through by peaceable adjustment," she said.

"Our super-technicians now have in their hands the knowledge, skill and equipment to turn a chaotic, anguished society into an association

"WEST POINT
OF THE AIR"
with MAUREEN O'SULLIVAN
ROBERT YOUNG - LEWIS ST
WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY
Clark Gable - Constance Benn
In
"AFTER OFFICE HOUR

right to organize for collective bargaining, and it declares with Daniel Webster that a government can not endure for long whose laws favor accumulation in the hands of a few and render the masses dependent.

The divorce between cultural intelligence and the conscience is becoming mythical. One of the most fearless labor organizers in the south is a young man of education, highly trained for the ministry and ordained in the Congregational church. The few ministers who have gone on the picket lines are as significant in their action as those who dedicated themselves to pacifism during the war and would be heroes today to the very man who dragged them from their pulpits to be jailed for sedition."

Strike Inspired Novel

When Mrs. Dargan came to Asheville to make her home in 1925, she had decided not to write any more, and as she says "wrote her farewell to literature" in a long poem published in the World Tomorrow in 1928. "Then, I suddenly found myself in 1929 writing a novel," she said. The Gastonia strike occasioned "Call Home the Heart" for, she remarked, "I felt that I could contribute something to the social movement without sacrificing my literary medium."

"Asheville seems to have gone literary the past year," the writer said. "One thinks first of Thomas Clayton Wolfe. I have just finished reading 'Of Time and the River,' a little late. I didn't have the leisure for it in New York, where I found it dividing interest among my friends with Vincent Sheehan's 'Personal History.' The closing of Wolfe's book is exquisite, of great poetic beauty, without wearying repetitions or painful exaggeration. Van Doren should have used it in his anthology instead of the striking but less original and creative passages on American place-names. In this author, our city will certainly have a Pulitzer winner this year, though I suspect he will regard the honor with Brobdingnagian aloofness.

Pickens Is Ashevillian

"We should insist on our claim to Robert Pickens too, who is an Ashevillian by marriage and spends part of his time here. His 'Storm Clouds Over Asia' is the clearest non-revolutionary presentation of the world's Far Eastern trouble that I have read. The style is condensed without loss of ease or grace, and gains strength by a brevity packed with essentials. His lance of humor bears the heft of wisdom, and makes me wonder if he got it from the Chinese.

"I don't suppose we can regard my friend, Dr. Frank Bohn, as one of our literary family, as he is here so rarely, but two sisters residing in Asheclose. They are my very interesting neighbors, and we have been making a joke of the fact that his deeply serious work, 'The Great Change,' written in collaboration with Prof. Richard Ely, so highly regarded in the critical world, did not get him the columns of attention and put him in the rhotogravure section as did his recent marriage to Secretary Roper's daughter."

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"Our super-technicians now have in their hands the knowledge, skill and equipment to turn a chaotic, anguished society into an association of free and happy human beings," Mrs. Dragan continued. "With 86 per cent of our American engineers unemployed it seems that we are a long way from putting a transformed system to work but anyone hearing a group of them talking will be encouraged by the rebellion seething among them against suppression and forced inactivity when they know what could be done by the full play of their hands, brain and implements."

Sees Cheering Sign

A cheering sign is found by the writer in the tendency towards a "united front" against besetting evils. "Churches that took orders from Washington and became practically recruiting stations for the war during the world holocaust are now sending delegates to the conferences and congresses against war and fascism," Mrs. Dargan said.

"They are not waiting for a wind out of the unknown to put life into a valley of dry bones. They show not only the desire but the intention of making the standards of the spirit apply to social processes. The Federal Council of Churches has said that the minimum wage shall be a living wage, that employes have the right to organize for collective bargaining, and it declares with Daniel Webster that a government can not endure for long whose laws favor accumulation in the hands of a few and render the masses dependent.

The divorce between cultural intelligence and the conscience is becoming mythical. One of the most fearless labor organizers in the south is a young man of education, highly trained for the ministry and ordained in the Congregational church. The few ministers who have gone on the picket lines are as significant in their action as those who dedicated themselves to pacifism during the war and would be heroes today to the very man who dragged them from their pulpits to be jailed for sedition."

Strike Inspired Novel

When Mrs. Dargan came to Asheville to make her home in 1925, she had decided not to write any more, and as she says "wrote her farewell to literature" in a long poem published in the World Tomorrow in 1928. "Then, I suddenly found myself in 1929 writing a novel," she said. The Gastonia strike occasioned "Call Home the Heart" for, she remarked, "I felt that I could contribute something to the social movement without sacrificing my literary medium."

"Asheville seems to have gone literary the past year," the writer said. "One thinks first of Thomas Clayton Wolfe. I have just finished reading 'Of Time and the River,' a little late. I didn't have the leisure for it in New York, where I found it dividing interest among my friends with Vincent Sheehan's 'Personal History.' The closing of Wolfe's book is exquisite, of great poetic beauty, without wearying repetitions or painful exaggeration. Van Doren should have used it in his anthology instead of the striking but less original and creative passages on American place-names. In this author, our city will certainly have a Pulitzer winner this year, though I suspect he will regard the honor with Brobdingnagian aloofness.

Pickens Is Ashevillian

"We should insist on our claim to Robert Pickens too, who is an Ashevillian by marriage and spends part of his time here. His 'Storm Clouds Over Asia' is the clearest non-revolutionary presentation of the world's Far Eastern trouble that I have read. The style is condensed without loss of ease or grace, and gains strength by a brevity packed with essentials. His lance of humor bears the heft of wisdom, and makes me wonder if he got it from the Chinese.

"I don't suppose we can regard my friend, Dr. Frank Bohn, as one of our literary family, as he is here so rarely, but two sisters residing in Asheville close. They are my very interesting neighbors, and we have been making a joke of the fact that his deeply serious work, 'The Great Change,' written in collaboration with Prof. Richard Ely, so highly regarded in the critical world, did not get him the columns of attention and put him in the rhotogravure section as did his recent marriage to Secretary Roper's daughter."

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.,
POST-RECORD
DECEMBER 18. 1935

New Proletarian Novel And Other Current Books Reviewed

Outstanding for her ability to combine artistic expression with ideals of the class struggle, Fielding Burke is one of the most persuasive writers of the ever-growing group of proletarian novelists.

Her "Call Home the Heart" was greeted by critics of all connections as a significant and impressive sign that a new author of distinction had appeared on the American literary scene. Her new novel, "A Stone Came Rolling" (Longmans Green), adds to her stature as a writer for it is evidence that Olive Dargan (for that is her real name) is not a one-book author and that the success of her first effort has not swerved her from devotion to social reform.

"A Stone Came Rolling" concerns the same people with whom the reader became acquainted in Miss Dargan's first book—Ishma and Britt, Bly Emberson and his wife, Verna. The background is the southern mill town of Dunmow and the theme, the conflict between mill workers and mill owners.

Miss Dargan unfortunately allows her characters to come between herself and her most effective and compelling material—the social unrest that culminates in strikes and death. Her men and women seem shadowy figures playing unreal parts when concerned with personal relationships of no social significance.

But when they appear as elements in the stirring labor struggle, then they take on color and dimension and vitality. This characteristic is due, of course, to the fact that Miss Dargan writes with genuine feeling and sincerity when she is dealing with the movement which moves her most strongly.

That is one salient mark of the proletarian novelists —they are more concerned with life and growth of the cause than of the individual human being.

Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan Wrestles With Breakfast And Her Forthcoming Book

By JAMES K. HUTSELL

Fudging just a little, we can tell you a small bit about the next Fielding Burke book.

It's going to be a volume dealing with labor and—if people will go off and leave its author alone, so that she can get her breakfast and attend to shipment of the manuscript—it may be out sometime before too awful long.

If you want to know any more than that, you'd better wait till after breakfast—Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan's breakfast, that is.

Come to think of it, we aren't right certain whether the new volume will appear under the Dargan name or under the Fielding Burke pseudonym. You can put that down to feeble reporting or you can put it down to guests in the house—(in Mrs. Dargan's house, that is)—who haven't had breakfast and to a projected trip to Sea Island.



OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN

At her Balsam avenue home in West Asheville, Olive Tilford Dargan just wasn't having much to say. But unless we're even more befuddled than we sound, the new nonfiction volume is going to fall somewhere in that general classification which a generation just ahead of this used to call proletariate. We didn't bring up that term before breakfast, though; it didn't look like a good gamble.

Mrs. Dargan said she hoped nobody was going to go away mad. . . Knowing all the time, of course, nobody has wrath of a calibre to stand up under those mischievous gray eyes and that funny smile she can turn loose on folks.

There hasn't been a new Dargan book since 1941, when "From My Highest Hill," a completely revised edition of her "Highland Annals," first came off the presses. That, you recall, came out of the years Olive Tilford Dargan spent as a Swain county farmer.

A lot of folks have been hoping for more of those Fielding Burke novels like those two that a decade or so back captured a majority of the critical world—"Call Home the Heart" and "A Stone Came Rolling." There is something else we can't tell you about. Mrs. Dargan still thought it would just be better if everybody went off and came back some other time.

When Olive Dargan is at that stage, it doesn't do any good to walk over and eye a line of volumes—(ranging all the way from a book on "Freud and Marx" to poetry by e. e. cummings)—and then stroll back and try to outargue the lady.

Her school-teacher tenacity begins to creep out then. She had parents for school-teachers, too. She was a Missouri school-marm before she went to Peabody College For Teachers. And she once lived two years in Boston.

Mrs. Dargan—we bring this up to prove a point—purchased her present home, Bluebonnet Lodge, in 1925. She passed through Asheville and liked it. That determination again.

So when she said come back some other time when there weren't any visitors, and when it was after breakfast, and after she got back from Sea Island (where she was going to see a sick friend), there was no doubt the jig was up. Gathering up the remnants of our dignity and confusion, we stalked out with a stubborn, grim reference to "possibly seeing you again sometime."

Outside, apparently safe behind a Rose of Sharon tree, we started grinning; nonchalance, that was the treatment for a woman like that. Then the wind outside blew upon the front door, which had been insecurely latched. From inside there came low, feminine laughter.

It's always best for a man to know when he's licked.

Herald Tribune
New York N Y

DEC 19 1935

Two "Proletarian Novels"

Fielding Burke's "A Stone Came Rolling" (Longmans, $2.50) is the Book Union's December selection; Grace Lumpkin, author of "A Sign for Cain" (Furman, $2.50), won last year's "Maxim Gorky Award" with her previous novel. Both books are surcharged with warm emotion; either of them might, under conceivable circumstances, catch a spark and become a "historic" book. Both suffer from those besetting faults of the "proletarian novelist": the black-and-white conception of human character and the impulsion to arrest the action of the story to preach a sermon. Fielding Burke's is a Southern strike story; "A Sign for Cain" is a tale of race and class conflict on the decaying cotton plantations, in the share-cropper country.

Christian Martyr on the Picket Line

It is from one of those modern spirituals which the colored workers of the South are still creating that Miss Burke—who used to write "bourgeois" poetry under the name of Olive Tilford Dargen—draws her title:

> A stone came rollin'—
> Rollin' through Dixie—
> Rollin' through Dixie—
> Tearin' down de kingdom ob de boss.

And this is significant; for, just as the mill workers of the South go onto the picket line singing Wesleyan hymns, so Miss Dargen herself, for all her hatred of the chains of old-fashioned religion, writes with an authentically religious fervor.

Indeed, a Gilbert Seldes, without too much distortion of fact, could find many parallels between the Moodey and Sankey revivals—or even the Crusades!—and the romantic, sacrificial ardor of Communist youth today. Miss Burke's book is a crusade against the churches of the South; nevertheless, it is a story of a sort of girl Christ of the Carolina mountains, told with poetry and passion which stems directly from the Christian tradition.

Ishma Hensley is a little too good to be true. She will be remembered, happily, by readers of Miss Burke's "Call Home the Heart." But in this new book Miss Burke and her heroine resolutely turn their backs upon those singing hills from which, in "Call Home the Heart," they drew their strength. Britt, Ishma's husband, thinks gratefully that they can always retreat to their old mountain farm on Cloudy Knob.

"Yes," says Ishma. "We've got our farm up there. And that's against us. . . . Others have to fight. There's no escape for them. Why should there be safety for us? Do you think we could ever be proud of ourselves, up there on our little peak of refuge? I don't want to run away."

(next page)

News
Charlotte N C

Literary Guests

Today's Book Page is playing host to three distinguished North Carolina writers, each of whom has a new book fresh from the presses. And each book covers a different phase of Carolina life. Paul Green writes of the tenant farmers in his "This Body The Earth." Olive Tilford Dargan (or Fielding Burke) has brought her mountain characters down to the mill village in "A Stone Came Rolling," and now she describes the textile scene. Rose Batterham, who used to live and teach in this state, introduces the mountaineers, Tennessee or Carolina, in her new "Pleasure Piece."

A growing spirit of social consciousness is evident in the books. Paul Green is particularly interested in the problems of the tenant farmers who struggle so hopelessly to improve their conditions and then fall so heavily back into the slough of inarticulate despair. And Olive Tilford Dargan, who was intensely interested in the plight of her mill folk in "Call Home the Heart," goes more deeply into their situation this time with her "A Stone Came Rolling."

Righteous Indignation

There is a righteous indignation in their work that has nothing to do with the commonly accepted religion of the Carolinas. There is a deep and abiding sympathy for the human being, a respect for the individual, an acknowledgment of the wrongs in the social system, and a determination to present these wrongs so vividly, so courageously, so strongly that steps may be taken to remedy the situation. Paul Green's picture of chaingang viciousness is almost incredible—and yet it falls short of the actual discoveries of chaingang atrocities here in Mecklenburg county, where not even the fact of two negroes losing their feet could persuade the courts that chaingang officials might be cruel, sadistic and inexcusably ruthless.

Herald Tribune

The American Rebel Tradition

Ishma is a Christian martyr, dedicated to the struggle for better lives for the working classes. She has the face and tongue which melts the hearts of jailers and holds the friendship even of a mill owner. Miss Burke tries to be scrupulously fair to her mill owners, but Bly Emberson, who refuses to cut wages when his fellow employers do, and attempts to turn over his mill to his workers, is hardly a real flesh-and-blood figure. The "bad" characters come to life—though it is a bit difficult wholly to believe in the cruel bigotry of Bly's pious wife; the "good" people are sentimentally romanced.

Yet in the mass story of the succession of strikes Miss Burke's story is burningly real. She knows those stumbling, singing crowds in the streets, the ignorant fears they inspire, their own bovine hesitations, and the cruel lengths to which a panic-stricken industrial community can let itself go, and she writes out of the hot fire of personal experience. Coming of Revolutionary Virginia stock herself, she has a rousing sense of the continuity of the American rebel tradition.

"I'd Love to See a Lynching"

That high poetry which sometimes crops out in "A Stone Comes Rolling" never interrupts "A Sign for Cain." The story drives direct to its smashing conclusion. Denis, the big Negro share cropper, comes back from the North with a faith, strange to his fellows, that Negroes and white men can organize together to better their common plight; this has a strange reality; so has the gallant fighting editor; so has the sluttish newspaper girl who says, "I'd love to see a lynching. It would be so exciting." I can imagine that I saw her eager face in one of those ghastly photographs which "Time" printed of California women ecstatically watching a lynching. The total pattern is genuine and alive; yet here again most of the characters are wooden types.

No more wooden than the figures in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," however. Style, substance, emotion may give a book significance, though it is not necessarily true that, as the editor of the "Proletarian" anthology says, "a great theme confers some greatness on whoever touches the hem of its garment." But a book with none of these may, arriving at its accidental moment of history, achieve genuine importance.

WEDNESDAY CLUB MEETS.

Members and guests of the Wednesday Club enjoyed a review of Olive Tilford Dargan's "Call Home the Heart," which was given by Mrs. Louis McGreal of Houston yesterday afternoon at the Y. W. C. A.

Mrs. McGreal's interpretation of the book was a masterly one, members of the club said, and her descriptions so vivid that the characters seemed to live. A record attendance was present.

Entertainment features of the meeting included an Indian dance by Miss Le Nan Briggs and negro spirituals by a quartet composed of Mrs. Lou Cargill, Mrs. Clara Wittig Moore, Douglas Montgomery and J. N. Spurway.

3/22/34
Galv. Tribune

FEB 9 - 1936
Post Wash. D.C.

JAMES JOYCE was 52 last Sunday, observing the day in his Paris flat. It is pleasant to know, considering the fact that for years after the European publication of "Ulysses" he was rewarded with scarcely a penny of royalties, that the American edition has brought him over $30,000. . . . Fielding Burke, the name to which the novels "Call Home the Heart" and "A Stone Came Rolling" are credited, is in reality the nom de plume of Olive Tilford Dargan, a poetess of some note who thought she had given up writing in 1928. The next year she found herself starting on a novel, the first-named, published in 1932, which brought great acclaim. The critics have been equally pleased with her latest. But evidently she doesn't care for her own name—her poetry likewise was written under a pseudonym.



FIELDING BURKE

lice, parades, riots, the militia, free-shooting, promiscuous cutting and violent death—incidents which we have been made familier with during the past several years by experience, hearsay and the newspapers.

Finally the book draws on to its big scene, the great union meeting at White Oak. Ishma, seeing in it an opportunity of turning its power "against the forces of murder and decay," took the platform. "That was the moment when her sympathy with the human surge around her was deepest, and she bowed her head before them. They were seeing the new Jerusalem beyond death. She had to bring it near—to put it on earth—in their lives—in reach of their hands—to set them walking on its actual streets." Thus inspired she began to speak. But soon she was interrupted.

"A thin but cutting voice came from a packed corner, sneering its way above her own, making sure it was heard and checking the unlaunched words on her lips. "Sister, did you ever hear of a man named Rad Bailey?"

This seems to have been a man with whom Ishma once lived, according to conventional standards, in sin. She faltered. The crowd turned on her. Britt, her husband, more of a spectator than a participant in the meeting, sprang to her aid. The congested emotion of the crowd had to find release. In the ensuing melee Britt was stabbed to death.

Ishma spiritually wounded almost to death returned to the mountains from which she came. From this point on the characters seem more real, the emotions more genuine, the scenes more surely painted; certainly the author's poetic talent has more congenial material in the mountains than it had in the clash of economic forces in the lower land. The trouble is that it took the first 350 pages to get Ishma back to the mountain air.

The book is certainly far from being an ordinary pleasant novel. The author has struck strongly, frankly and courageously at absurd mental habits and harmful economic conditions of the industrial South. What she has to say may well be read and pondered by the South. And she can write prose of undoubted strength and beauty.

Nevertheless it has grave defects. The author has fallen into the propagandists' pitfall. The characters are not so much human beings as battlers for or against labor. Those who are on the side of labor and light are all too good and those who are on the side of capitalism and darkness are a little too bad to be real. Nor does it appear that the author is any too familiar with either the mill owners or the workers. She is not hard-boiled enough for such hard-boiled material. It needs a Faulkner or a Hemingway. Even Erskine Caldwell, tough enough in "Tobacco Road" with its tenant farmer class, got a bit soft in "God's Little Acre" when his hero actually entered the mill to turn on the power. In one scene in "A Stone Came Rolling" two mill owners from an office window watch a flying squadron walk into their mill and stop their supposedly loyal workers from working. Startled they summoned the superintendent.

"What does this mean, Edwards?"

"The switches are pulled, Mr. Gowan."

"The dastards; Did they—"

Now I never heard anybody called a dastard in real life, and I therefore object to it in a realistic novel. "Dastard" may be very close to what the mill owner called the flying squadron, but that will not do.

However, the chief defect in the novel seems to be that no one of the important characters represents either side of the industrial clash. Bly was certainly no representative mill owner and Ishma was no mill worker. Of course it is not a critic's province to say what material a writer shall choose in the practice of his art. But it would

Time — Dec 30, '35

naturally occur to anyone that a writer who writes up the Baer-Louis prize-fight and leaves out both Louis and Baer would have done better to have chosen some other subject.

The growing pains of industry in the Piedmont offer rich material for a great novel. But it will probably not be written. It would take the hard-boiled objectivity of an Earnest Hemingway, the expert knowledge of the human side of the textile industry reposed in the brain of a Harriet Herring, the power of a Thomas Wolfe, the experience of a mill worker born and raised among the lint-dodgers, and the crusading spirit of a Fielding Burke.

In default of such a book, "A Stone Came Rolling" is worth reading.

Warrenton, N. C.

The many readers who missed Fielding Burke's *Call Home the Heart* (1932) might get through several hands of *A Stone Came Rolling* without thinking they were sitting in on anything more anti-social than a game of hearts. But sooner

memo to Lind bergh • Can-T you give — Editor of Time a heart? His cluck and cackle indicates that a chicken's will fill the vacancy. O. D.

TIME, *December* 30, 1935

or later they will realize that Author Burke's pastoral pack has a dialectic joker in it. A sequel to her first book, *A Stone Came Rolling* reintroduces Ishma, the hill-billy Judith; her physical but saintly husband Britt, *et al.* In tone and texture a kind of reincarnation of the works of Gene Stratton Porter, with Rose O'Neill and Fannie Hurst thrown in, *A Stone Came Rolling* is a strange mixture of unabashed sentiment and social indignation.

When Britt moved down into North Carolina's Piedmont to farm, his easy-going charm, church-going habits and knowledgeable affection for the soil would soon have admitted him to honorable citizenship. But his wife Ishma's goings-on set tongues wagging, heads shaking. A beauty, intelligent and subversive, she set the neighboring town of Dunmow on its ear, was sure to be found at the storm-centre of all industrial disturbances. Mill-owner Bly Emberson, sanctified by a lifetime of patient subservience to his steel-jacketed wife, fell in love with her. So did his lawyer pal, Derry. Ishma might well have thought she was a fatal woman: Bly drowned himself because of her while Britt was killed defending her fair name. Author Burke, true to her literary gods, cannot ring down on her heroine the curtain she deserves: the book ends with Ishma in her prison cell hearing the thunder of proletarian feet rushing to release her.

N Y World-Telegram

NOV 29 1935

FIELDING BURKE, author of "Call Home the Heart," whose new novel, "A Stone Came Rolling," is out today, was born in the South of an old Virginia family. At the age of 17 she went to Peabody College and was graduated two years later with a degree. Then she spent a year at Radcliffe studying English and philosophy. She has lived in various parts of the South, in New York and in Europe. Of recent years she has lived in North Carolina, at first on a mountain farm and later in mill towns and cities, where she has organized relief for strikers. Although her first novel appeared in 1932, she had previously written a good deal of poetry under another name. She wrote her farewell to literature in a long poem in 1928, but in 1929 she suddenly found herself writing a novel, which was "Call Home the Heart." "A Stone Came Rolling" is in no sense a sequel, but many of the characters of the earlier book reappear.



Fielding Burke.

CAROLYN MARX.

N Y TIMES

OCT 13 1935

Fielding Burke, whose "A Stone Came Rolling" will be published by Longmans, Green at the end of this month, has been in South Carolina trying to establish a refuge for the textile children. Three bankruptcies have interrupted the work but it will not be abandoned.

From "Unity" Mch 12 '37

The Study Table

A. S. B.

A Voice From the South

A STONE CAME ROLLING. *By Fielding Burke.* 412 *pp. New York: Longmans Green and Co.* $2.50.

Here is a great book, and a timely one. *Call Home the Heart,* by Fielding Burke—pen name of Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan—took the public by storm. In *A Stone Came Rolling,* Ishma and Britt Hensley appear again, in a new setting. Dunmow is a North Carolina mill town. Ishma is trying to spread a spirit of rebellion among the exploited workers. Britt is cultivating a farm nearby. On a broad canvas, with power and poignancy, the author paints the growing misery of the people, as their employers, hit by the depression, cut wages again and again. In scene after scene, graphic as an etching, she increases the reader's sorrow and anger. One humane mill-owner, Bly Emberson, refuses to cut the pay below a subsistence level. The other mill-owners join to boycott him. But old Dr. Schermerhorn urges him on. He says:

"The point of difference, or guilt, between us and the originating fathers is that we know what we are doing. Thanks to our frontal expansion, we know. And we could not only do something about it, we could do everything about it. We could remove every discomfort, every anxiety, every anguish attendant on economic life."

The relation between Ishma and Britt shows that a fundamental difference of opinion need not part husband and wife, when there is real love between them, and when neither tries to tyrannize over the other. Britt does not believe in violence, and he is religious. Ishma is convinced that violence is inevitable, and that religion is the opiate of the people. Yet their love never fails. Bly Emberson has ceased to love his wife, Verna. Her ideas are wholly different from his, and she is a tyrant. Verna is the most exasperating woman the present reviewer has met in fiction, except perhaps Flora Valcour in *Kincaid's Battery,* by George W. Cable. The detestable Flora was very bright, but had no conscience. The odious Verna has a conscience, and really means well, but brings misery to her husband and children through her stupidity, religious bigotry, sensuality, and obstinate though unconscious selfishness. There is a dramatic scene where Verna, seeing a car parked under the trees in the dark, and recognizing it as that of her daughter's lover, insists, over her husband's protest, on turning the light from their own car into the parked one. Her object is to prove that the young man has an illicit amour, and thus to cure her daughter of caring for him. Startled by the light, the girl in his arms raises her head, and Verna sees the face of her own daughter.

Under the pressure of growing suffering, a great strike starts, and spreads to neighboring towns; 20,000 workers are out; but, partly through timid and conservative leadership, partly through the unscrupulous tactics of the mill-owners, it comes to nothing. Ishma continues to emphasize that white and colored work-

This book is a new proof of Mrs. Dargan's versatility, her power to do literary work of distinction in widely different lines. All along there has been a revolutionary streak in her writings, and the width of it has grown.

ALICE STONE BLACKWELL.

ers must unite against their exploiters, and that men must work out their own deliverance, and not await it from heaven. She believes passionately that the deliverance is near:

"The machine is hard, but I love it. It is something that is going on forever. The world will have to come under its power and adjust itself to it, as it does to the sun and the tides. Then it will be the best friend that man ever had. We say it makes us slaves. So it does. But that's its revenge for using it the wrong way, for not understanding it. Men have considered the machine only as a goods-maker. Essentially the machine is a maker of leisure, and by way of making leisure it produces goods. We must not say that a machine makes so many yards of cloth, and how shall we sell it? We must say that it makes a million hours of leisure, and how shall it be divided, and what shall be done with them?"

A colored organizer is transferred from one jail to another, with the intention that he shall be lynched on the way. His friends impersonate the lynchers, and take him out of the hands of the unresisting sheriff.

Bly Emberson, driven to distraction between his business difficulties, Verna's exactions, and unrequited love for Ishma, drowns himself, after arranging with his son to have the workers reorganize the business and run it themselves. His death, which is supposed to be an accident, calls out a widespread tribute of affection and esteem, including that of the mill-owners who have been boycotting him. Verna has the funeral conducted in accordance with her own ideas, not her husband's, and sails on, in her widowhood, still immovably self-complacent.

Dunmow has thirty-seven churches, of many denominations. None of them inspires in the worshippers any sense of duty towards the oppressed. The one pastor who really believes in human brotherhood, Father Litmore of the Episcopalian church, urges unity in love. Ishma answers, "Men can't be united in love while they are taking away one another's jobs. Compelled to take them if they can." Later Father Litmore becomes so strongly convinced of this that he invites all the other ministers and the general public to a meeting where he tells them that the Christian church now stands at the parting of the ways, and tries to rally them to the side of social justice. Not one of the other ministers responds. Some of them walk out before the end of his address. But his words sink into the hearts of some of the laymen present.

Britt is murdered by the opposition. Ishma, broken-hearted, loses for a time all interest in life. But she goes back to the mountains—Britt's country—and after a while regains her old spirit and power to work. There is a wonderful description of a mountain storm. While it rages, two young lovers find each other.

Ishma goes on with her labors in Dunmow, and wins more and more converts. As the spirit of revolt grows, the repressive measures of the employers become still more violent. Ishma is arrested, and is brutally beaten up in jail by a secret agent of the mill-owners, who is himself half in love with her. He in turn is beaten senseless by one of the guards, who has some humanity; and the story ends with Ishma's rescue from prison at the hands of her friends.

Raleigh News & Observer Dec. 1 '35

A STONE CAME ROLLING. By Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green and Company, New York. Price $2.50.

By WILLIAM T. POLK.

This is a novel of industrial strife in Piedmont North Carolina.

It deals mainly with two families. There is Bly Emberson, kind-hearted, philosophical, liberal mill-owner, who is gradually going broke because his conscience won't let him meet the cut-throat, slave-driving competition of the other mills, and his wife, Verna, prudish, fanatically religious and naggingly tyrannical, who succeeds in driving her husband to his death, her son, Martin, into hypocricy, her daughter, Lorene, already on the road to Hell via Chapel Hill, into open a rebellion and secret marriage, and her submissive daughter, Evelyn, into a trap of neuroses.

The other family is that of Ishma Hensley, handsome, high-spirited, well-read mountain woman, who has settled in the Piedmont with her husband, Britt, easy-going, good-natured, popular farmer. They love each other very much. But Ishma's chief aim in life is to free the wage-slaves in the mills and lead them from starvation and drudgery to a better life, through union organization.

Ishma finds that the religion of the workers is a stumbling stone. "They'll get so full of heaven in the sky that they won't care about making one on earth. They'll drop back into the old ditch of patience that it's been so hard to get them out of." She sees the capitalists using the workers' religion to keep them down. "For religion had two halves, one should remember. The half which was force and authority must remain with those who already held it. The half which was peace and surrender must be left to the workers. Pressed upon them, if they balked at it, by every means and method, pulpit or sword."

All this is doubtless true and important. It is also true that institutionalized Christianity which allows itself to become a tool of capitalism should expect to be fought when its master is fought and fall with him if he falls. But the author's point is reiterated and elaborated until the reader is in danger of being bored.

The novel moves on through the incidents of industrial unrest—wage-cuts, stretch-outs, union organization, occasional betrayal of the workers by their organizers, strikes, flying squadrons, special po-

NEW YORK CITY

Book Review Digest

JAN - 1936

DARGAN, MRS OLIVE (TILFORD) (FIELDING BURKE, pseud). A stone came rolling. 412p $2.50 Longmans

"Three years ago, when Fielding Burke wrote 'Call Home the Heart,' that strangely stirring novel aroused much comment. Now, a sequel is published, 'A Stone Came Rolling.' . . Ishma Hensley and her husband, Britt, are again the central characters, each governed by a strong ideal: to do their share toward making the world habitable for everyone, rather than for a privileged few. Ishma is the idealist, rampant, zealous, but not fanatic. Britt is always for the peaceable way. 'A Stone Came Rolling' is the story of their part in the 'revolution' in Dunmow, a Carolina mill town." Christian Science Monitor

"In Fielding Burke's novels there is a certain quality which some of us once feared was lost among the proletarian writers. It is the quality of 'heart'—of a sympathy for the characters of the story that grows out of love rather than hate or bitterness. What she feels about the exploited and the hungry springs neither from experience nor an intellectual conviction. More than any other radical novelist of our times, she has selected and assimilated her material emotionally. . . Nevertheless, I feel sure that for the purposes of the novel, Fielding Burke has a little too much love. Her excess of emotion leads her occasionally to lushness in writing." Bernard Smith

+ — Books p4 D 8 '35 1200w

"Fielding Burke's stirring presentation of conditions and ideals among the workers is different from the usual treatment. She is never bitter nor hysterical, in spite of the suffering and tumult she has witnessed. Her earnest plea for the working class is unusually effective, unmasking the abuses of a capitalistic system and forcing its adherents to recognize the need for reform. . . Society must do something for its millions of workers, and Miss Burke shows how the stone is already rolling." M. W. S.

+ Christian Science Monitor p12 N 27 '35 460w

"It is a book with many moments of genuine emotion and of beauty, and it is, as was its predecessor, important because it deals with socially significant material, a changing South, and especially because its potential revolutionaries are of old and sound American stock. I cannot fail to say, however, that it often reminded me of some of the intellectual efforts of the pre-revolutionary Russians, kind-hearted and nobly intentioned." Herschel Brickell

+ — N Y Post p13 N 30 '35 1200w

"Fielding Burke, who has written for many years under the name of Olive Dargan, is native from way back. Her picture of a civilization and a social order is accurate and convincing. . . It is not so easy to realize the characters as human beings. . . However, except for such fuzzy characterization, and a certain lack of structure to the book as a whole, she has lived up to the high promise of her first novel. It is to be hoped that its chronicle will be carried further in another novel." Selden Rodman

+ — Sat R of Lit 13:12 N 30 '35 440w

News
Charlotte N C
Nov 3 1935

Mill Town Is Locale Of New Carolina Book

Olive Tilford Dargan (Writing As "Fielding Burke") Continues Her Story Of Mill People.

A STONE CAME ROLLING. By Fielding Burke. $2.50. Longmans, Green and company. 412 pp.

Reviewed by Walter Wadsley

This story of social unrest, a poignant if somewhat faintly biased picture of the old struggle of textile operators against operatives, is a continuation of the author's first novel though not a sequel. She maintains her drama, her keen delineation of character, her biting criticism, her humaneness.

The same characters as in "Call Home the Heart" march through the pages of "A Stone Came Rolling" but the scene is land in a different section of North Carolina. The same type of strike, the same motivation threads the story with Bly Emberson, mill owner, a kindly sincere person dominated by his fanatically religious and selfish wife.

The Emberson's children — cowed and held in ignorant fear of God through the mother's moronic raving until one after the other, except one, break away—; Ishma who feels her heart torn for the strikers and tries to continue her work for the good of the operatives by inciting them to strike; Britt, her husband, a peace-loving farmer who stands by her side as best he can although Emberson falls in love with Ishma — as does the doctor, Derry Unthank—while Farinda, mountain girl mill worker who loves Britt gradually comes to love Martin Emberson.

Scene Laid In Dunmow

There are others who live in the town of Dunmow — other workers who, when the mills close down, say they had rather starve because it is the will of God than have anything to do with Ishma or her kind.

The author threads her story heavily with religion, holding up its fallacies and the stupidity of its followers. In addition, she gives a bit of gratuitous history regarding the establishment of various religions in North Carolina which seems to have no connection with an otherwise tight and well-told story.

Here in a small mill section we are given a view of the trials of textile workers and of the mill owners, although sentiment is built up more for labor than capital. There seems to be an honest attempt to present both sides of the picture but one with such definite and positive opinions cannot, or does not, accomplish this.

Philosophy And Wisdom

There is a great deal of excellent philosophy and wisdom scattered through the novel as the characters talk and sing and fight and go to church and starve. We are grateful that the author has not attempted to transfer too much mountain or textile inflection to paper, for thus the reading is easier and serves a much better purpose.

The book is dolorous, bright, tragic, witty—all those things that help round out an interesting novel, although the story does drag on occasions.

Whether your sympathies are with capital or labor you probably will enjoy "A Stone Came Rolling," for it is intensely presented and springs from a sincere and moving spirit.

She also can outline a character and a situation with a few swift strokes, as in the following:

"Anne was not well. So far she had kept on her feet, with her house wearing its usual gleam; but she felt herself sinking. Her disease was pellagra, sometimes called 'mother sickness,' because mothers usually ate less than others in a family where the supply was uncertain. Their stomachs became adjusted to hunger until they could ignore it, and thus undernourished they were easily subject to attack."

Miss Burke's women are convincing and completely realized. Her portraits of men are less so. Her gallery of working men and women is genuine; she is less convincing in her sketches of employers and big-wigs.

In action and incident she is at her best. With savagery, ignorance, and folly she is unsparing, but in the midst of them she holds to wisdom and understanding. There is no doubt as to where her sympathies lie—it is with her working people and with the mountains they come from.

Observer
Charlotte N C
Dec 29 1935

LITERARY LANTERN

By
PHILLIPS RUSSELL.

The conversion of simple hill people, content with their little farms and ways, into industrial workers living in large and complicated towns has been a phenomenon accompanied in the South by wrenches, gropings, strikes, and other dramatic circumstances which are bound to attract the story-teller.



PHILLIPS RUSSELL

Fielding Burke, whose novel, "Call Home the Heart" made a decided impression some three years ago, has carried her particular story a step further in "A Stone Came Rolling" (Longmans, N. Y., $2.50).

Fielding Burke is a poet. She is also a writer of delicacy and distinction. Witness this opening of her first chapter:

"Fairinda lightly kissed the air touching her lips to April. Not so foolish a gesture for the time and place. That part of the middle South whose sunset rampart is the high Smokies and whose eastern lap is furbelowed by the Atlantic, was slipping out of its early twitter into full song. Midway between the scalloped sea-edge and the blue band of mountains, Fairinda's land lay wide and amiable, its valleys generous, its river complacent, its hills lightly lifted. Here spring used neither the penurious caution of the mountainside, making man search for favors, nor the florescent waste of the coast, that angled him in ropes of fragrance, choking his nostrils and purpose and giving him flower-weary eyes. It came to him companionably in sweet, unconscious fusion, with magic to be carried unknowingly in the heart. In short, this was the land of perfect spring."

James Gray

drawing room seem almost unbearably trivial and idiotic. For in it men and women struggle with splendid fortitude against the bitter cruelties of circumstance. It is impossible not to be deeply engrossed and profoundly moved by such a story.

There are magnificent scenes in Mr. Burke's book. They have the elemental quality of melodrama. But one is not ashamed to succumb to their excitement because nothing is faked or artificial in their construction. Their thrilling quality is intimately related to authentic emotion. Such a scene is the one in which Ishma repudiates the negroes' gratitude. Another, equally touching, is that in which Britt fights the minister who has denounced Ishma for deserting him. Both have a sort of grandeur mixed with their violence.

Throughout, the writing is characterized by a restrained and yet compelling forcefulness. The objective method of telling the story has a sort of under-current of lyric fervor. It is difficult to say how Mr. Burke achieves this effect without once deserting his position of detached observer. It must be, I think, simply that he has a peculiar rich intuition and out of it he has wrought characters so complete, so perfectly imagined that their impulses command spontaneous sympathy.

All I know about Fielding Burke at the moment is that he is a first rate novelist. But his importance is obvious. We shall know much more later.

Books of Things — Lewis Gannett Her. Trib.

My Books of 1932

Three books published in 1931 seem to me to stand head and shoulders above the rest of the year's crop: "The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens"; Pearl Buck's "The Good Earth"; the Shaw-Terry Letters. And in the 1932 crop I found as I looked over the lists that these were the books which I had most enjoyed reading—not necessarily the "best books" of 1932, but those I read with keenest delight, though, as the list will show, for very different reasons:

NON-FICTION

"Lorenzo in Taos," by Mabel Dodge Luhan (Knopf).

"Return to Yesterday," by Ford Madox Ford (Liveright).

"Expression in America," by Ludwig Lewisohn (Harper's).

"History of the Russian Revolution," by Leon Trotzky (Simon & Schuster).

"The Story of My Life," by Clarence Darrow (Scribner's).

"Memoirs of a Soldier of Fortune," by Rafael de Nogales (Harrison Smith).

FICTION

"This Man Is My Brother," by Myron Brinig (Farrar & Rinehart).

"Brave New World," by Aldous Huxley (Doubleday, Doran).

"Rackety Rax," by Joel Sayre (Knopf).

"Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke (Longman's, Green).

"1919," by John Dos Passos (Harcourt, Brace).

Journal
Madison Wisc

FEB 16 1936

Southern Struggle

"A STONE CAME ROLLING," by Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green and Co., New York City, $2.50.

REVIEWED BY EDWIN HONIG

FROM OUT the rumbling chaos of the deep South, which overnight has been shorn of its quiet-running ease to the acute consciousness of industrial unrest, comes a pertinent document keenly aware of the new struggle for human survival. Fielding Burke has penned this legend, at once gentle in its appeal and sharply indicting of a race, of whose details, save for occasional newspaper dispatches and recent summer headlines, the American public remains sadly ignorant.

To many a reposing mind, the sheltered vision of that region south of the Carolinas is one made long ago in a forgotten history class, of unbroken balmy contentment, of scattered humanity moving unhurried amid cabbage patch and cotton field; a vision indeed which prompts the bitter query: What can these people know of city worries, of unemployment and economic strife, of starvation and industrial diseases?

It is precisely such an erroneous belief which the novel, "A Stone Came Rolling" does much to dispel. The tale builds scene upon scene of disturbing conflict, of the sudden clash of peaceful people made desperate by an illogical system of life which the onslaught of machine labor has brought into vivid being together with a queer set of confusing consequences. Conditions are aggravated not because the machine itself is a natural producer of evil, but because men cloddishly put it to use for profits instead of for leisure, for which, the author argues, it was originally intended.

That Fielding Burke, a new figure upon the literary horizon, has come to such vigorously elucidated conclusions about the whole array of social forces, is both stimulating and gratifying. From a vigilant audience of discriminating readers that has long awaited a realistic novel of the South unadulterated by Freudian fetishes and esoteric bemusings, or reeking of century-ago aristocracies and outworn etiquettes, "A Stone Came Rolling" has awakened more than casual interest.

Miss Burke, one feels, has added voice and time and issue to the writings of Ellen Glasgow and Edna Ferber, her older and more staid contemporaries. The temper of our modern life has constantly been with her, the sense of huge disorder has never left her. Nor can it be said that in the heat of conviction, the pulsing that is human in the hearts of characters was lost. Contrarily, such inherent partisanship has yielded a genuine pathos and a stirring human sympathy which is rare among the cynical writers of our day.

Especially noteworthy is the treatment of Ishma, the pioneering heroine. In her, the author betrays a fierce love for nature and the general bewilderment of man in contact with it. While one can sense the specific weaknesses in the persons of Bly Emberson, manufacturer, and in his fanatical wife, Verna, and understand it as excellent character portrayal in fiction, there is left the consciousness that these characters are somewhere alive today and are bearing the selfsame brunt of hardship.

"A Stone Came Rolling" is an important novel in a confined sense of the word. It can hardly rate with the permanent literature of the present. The works of Proust, Joyce and Hemingway will more certainly serve posterity as remarkable testimonials of our hectic era, as books written with a carefully constructed technique, with profound and vital meanings and the genius of the individual artist embedded deep in each volume.

Fielding Burke's technique is not flawless. She is not entirely aware of the novel-form and its limitations. Her idiom, colloquial though it may be, is oftimes strained. Nor is her prose consistently powerful throughout. Nevertheless, she has caught some of that anguish and fervor of a people in the throes of despair and revolt. She has given us a living record of today, a strikingly clear mirror into which we may peer and note many of our most prominent blemishes at a time when we are apt to make too light a matter of our distorted world physiognomy.

America — N.Y.
June 11, '32

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(There wouldn't be any Jims & Bainie's)
J.D.

Journal
Madison Wisc

FEB 16 1936

Southern Struggle

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America — N.Y.
June 11, '32

parochial work.

In "Call Home the Heart," (Longmans, Green. $2.50) Fielding Burke presents a subtle, though none the less powerful, plea for communism and birth control. All the evils he so graphically depicts with unsparing realism have their origin in the insatiate greed of capitalists and in the too numerous progeny of poverty-stricken, incompetent parents. Ishma Waycaster, born of noble stock that had run to seed amid the mountains of North Carolina, is the pathetic heroine. Out of spirit with her people, endowed with love of beauty and an appetite for knowledge, unacquainted with restraint or genuine moral principle, scourged by conflicting passions within, she leaves the wretched environment of her childhood, deserts husband and son, and escapes with a former lover to the drab exile of a mill town. "She was asking so little of life, she thought . . . when, in fact, she was asking for more than life has ever given to anyone; an understanding of itself." But the mills only increase her suffering and misery, and after four bitter years of struggle she returns to the mountains, awaiting that happy millennium of communism which will bind all nations into one great brotherhood of fraternal charity. Granted that the evils portrayed are true (and industrial despotism cannot be defended), nevertheless, it is one thing to decry the evil, another to propose the proper remedy. It is truly marvelous to behold the chameleon-like change of the author from the cynical reviewer of realistic capitalism to the idealistic propagandist of international communism. One wonders would "the tail of capitalism," the breadline, disappear under an army of such improvident managers as Jim and Bainie Wishart.

(There wouldn't be any Jims & Bainie's I.D.)

ESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1932.

"Call Home the Heart," New Novel, Discloses Talented Authorship

Dispatch Tribune

Fielding Burke Portrays Woman of Heroic Will Amid Terrible Realities of Life in North Carolina Mountain Community.

St. Paul Pioneer Press

By James Gray.

HERE IS A NEW and, I think, genuinely distinguished talent. Fielding Burke's first novel, "Call Home the Heart," just published by Longmans, Green, reveals an already mature skill, a generous mind, and an intimate knowledge of the people about whom he writes.

This is exactly the sort of book to which the Pulitzer prize committee should give its attention. I hope—but not too sanguinely—that the members will come to hear of it. It would be pleasant if, for once, the prize could go to a man who has had something better than a surface of glib mediocrity, had perhaps even a little seriousness and dignity.

Fielding Burke writes with compassionate clarity of vision about the people of the North Carolina mountains and mill towns. He is concerned with the terrible realities of life in a community where hardship, ignorance and prejudice are undermining the fine forces of human nature. Like Erskine Caldwell's "Tobacco Road," reviewed in this column a few days ago, "Call Home the Heart" paints a depressing and alarming picture of present day conditions in the South. But there is the greatest difference between the two books in the reaction of the people to their shabby setting.

"Tobacco Road" is concerned entirely with passive, unresisting creatures who have lost the power to act. Mr. Burke's book is made dramatically effective and almost lyrically beautiful by the spirit of protest in the two central figures. They do not submit to the meanness, barrenness and futility of their lives. Though their struggles are faltering and very incompletely effective, the resistence itself is fine and touching.

* * *

Ishma Maycaster
An Heroic Figure.

The story is principally that of Ishma Waycaster, a woman of heroic will and really magnificent literary stature. From her pioneer grandmother she

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.—REPUBLICAN

APR 1 1913

REVIEWS OF NEW BOOKS.

A HIGHLY POETIC DRAMATIST.

Olive Dargan's Blank Verse Tragedy of Social Philosophy in Romantic Allegory.

"The Mortal Gods and Other Plays" (Scribner's), by Olive Tilford Dargan, is a volume of three poetic dramas in uncommonly gifted blank verse, the two besides that which gives the volume its title being "A Son of Hermes" and "Kidmir." "The Mortal Gods" is a highly-colored and impassioned romance with many passages of rare beauty, which, in spite of its imaginary surroundings in a far country, is very clearly a reflection of modern social philosophy and to no small degree an allegory of capitalistic greed. It tells the story of Hudibrand, king of Assaria, of Hernda, his daughter, and of Chartrien, a prince of Assaria, and of other lesser characters. Hudibrand is a king who rules not, as his name might suggest, with the aid of helmeted men at arms in an earlier century, but through financial manipulations, the greedy exploitation of natural resources and the merciless exploitation of men and women. Hernda is pictured as a heroine who has accepted the luxuries of the old order without understanding what they mean until her lover, Chartrien, whom she first considers a traitor, begins to open her eyes at the moment when she in her misunderstanding has betrayed his friend and earned his scorn. But once awakened the princess proves herself of truly noble stuff. She braves the dangers of a cruel prison camp conducted by the premier of a neighboring country where Chartrien has been held and is about to be murdered under a "fugitive law," like that of Mexico, in order that she may acquit herself by aiding in the escape of his friend and may learn upon what real evils dominion like her father's is founded. The prison camp, whose unhappy inmates work in the fields and are flogged to death, although fanciful suggests the explotation of some great industrial corporation.

In spite of the sordidness of that for which the allegory stands, and which more often and more easily is treated with the method of grim realism, Mrs Dargan's command of melodious and nobly-impassioned blank verse, together with her creative imagination, has enabled her to fashion a drama of much fascination and high literary quality. In her hands that which so commonly becomes a stiff and pedantic medium, is notable alike for an ease, a plasticity, and a richness which are the witnesses to unusual poetic power. It is an old lament that in America the audience is small that is capable of appreciating the essentially literary drama. But those who are capable will find in "The Mortal Gods" and Mrs Dargan's other plays a rare pleasure and satisfaction. The state of American letters will never be hopeless while such work is produced.

has inherited an undiluted energy, and, as a tacit acknowledgment of her superior force, the improvident family into which she is born allows the heavy weight of its inadequacy to rest upon her.

Her impulse to escape out of this world of shabby concession is checked by the more immediately urgent impulse to marry the vivid and dramatic young man who comes singing the mountain folk songs. Britt, though he has the temperament of a wandering minstrel, puts all that by to work with Ishma. All of their young exuberance is recklessly expended in the effort to pull themselves out of the confused squalor to which they were born.

But the dead weight of the family inertia hangs upon them. All of their plans for making an orderly retreat together are defeated. The pitiless routine of sickness, breeding, fighting for a precarious existence embitters Ishma to the point of making her strike back at destiny with angry random gestures of revolt. When the opportunity comes to her to run away to the mill town with an old suitor, she seizes it even though she cares only for Britt.

* * *

Impulse of Protest Undergoes Diversion.

Circumstances in the mill town are, however, no less intimately associated with meaningless drudgery. Ishma's first reaction to her new life with Rad is one of dull dismay at the bargain so impetuously made. But presently her native force begins to reassert itself. Under the guidance of the village doctor she begins to make a career for herself. All of her faculties are at last completely awakened and she diverts her powerful impulse of protest into the service of other victims of injustice. Her tremendous will finds a sufficient release thou[gh] personal experience continues t[o] tragi[c]

Her most dramatic [struggle] against that of ig[norance] the night when s[he] from a mob hysteric[al] does succeed in saving [the] black women insist upon expre[ssing] with physical intimacy, Ishma suddenly d[iscovers] that she is not quite as impersonal as she has imagined. She fights off their embraces with her fists.

Suddenly aware that she is still capable of personal emotion and that something in her demands an individual life, she leaves the mill town and returns to Britt. It is a touching and entirely believable conclusion.

* * *

Magnificent Scenes, Authentic Emotion.

"Call Home the Heart" has the dignity and seriousness that there can be in the novel only when the persons involved are significant and their emotions spring out of fundamental human needs. A book of this sort makes the polite fictions of the

EVENING POST
Post
CHICAGO, ILL.
APR 15 1939

Life and Love in Mountain and Mill

Call Home the Heart, by Fielding Burke. $2.50. (Longmans, Green.)

When Elizabeth Madox Roberts wrote "The Time of Man" she set a standard for mountain stories which forever ruined the reading of lesser ones and makes a little rash the mention in the same breath of the first novel of an unknown writer. Nevertheless, Fielding Burke has written a North Carolina mountain story which has the mood and emotional reach, if not quite the simplicity, of "The Time of Man."

The first third of the book is earth literature pure and simple. this story of Ishmalee Waycaster, who cooked and washed and hoed garden six days a week for her sister's large family and spent the seventh day atop of Lame Goat ridge drinking in enough beauty to carry through the work in the week to come.

But "A gal she must marry, and a wife she must carry." Britt Bailey is able to make her forget her determination never to get caught in the hopelessness of mountain living, and Ishmalee becomes, outwardly, just another mountain woman scraping along from harvest to harvest. Four years with no breaks at all made it impossible for her to refuse escape when the chance came. So Ishmalee exchanged the mountains she loved and her husband and son for the intoxicating chant and rhythm of machinery in a drab mill town.

No woman like Ishmalee could work long without being drawn into the enthusiasm of working with the union against intolerable conditions. The union organizers opened up new intellectual vistas. Here at last was an outlet for her tremendous nervous energy.

Suddenly this is a labor story, as poignant and exciting to the reader as picketing must have been to the mountain-bred Ishmalee. She found a new way of life she wanted to carry home; she dreamed of utilizing for wan mill children the pleasant mountainsides which could not be cultivated.

But these are not the reasons she goes back to Cloudy Knob; this isn't a labor story after all, but the record of a woman passionately in love with her mountains and her man, and unable to forget either.

MARGARET GROBMAN.

N. C. Books And Readers

IN A DOUBLE page spread, The Saturday Review of Literature reviews three books by North Carolina authors—the latest works of Thomas Wolfe (his volume of short stories), of Fielding Burke (Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan of Asheville) and Paul Green. In The New York Times of Monday, John Chamberlain devotes his whole column to Mrs. Dargan's "A Stone Came Rolling," which is in some sense a sequel to "Call Home the Heart."

As The Raleigh News and Observer remarks, these books do not thus receive attention from the critics just because they are books of importance to North Carolina, but because they are "important to contemporary American literature."

Then The Observer asks how many North Carolinians will ever be aware of the publication of these books, much less read them. The Observer sorrowfully and accurately finds that, while the state is coming of age in letters, our North Carolina writers of books can not be regarded as representatives of a literary renaissance in the state.

It is only too true that in these matters the state still makes halting progress. But it is not foolish complacency to say that there is nevertheless some progress.

If it is true that bookstores and public libraries are still the exception, it is also true that not so many years ago a public library was almost a wonder to the inhabitants and public school libraries were hardly included in the fondest dreams.

Meager income for the mass of the people, the lack of libraries, for community or school, many homes without books —and all these factors go along together—it will take perhaps several more generations of approximate material welfare to make a big change in such conditions.

News
CHarlotte N C
OCT 13 1935

From Carolina

Fielding Burke's new novel, "A Stone Came Rolling," which is a sequel to "Call Home the Heart," will be published by Longmans, Green And of course you know that Fielding Burke is the pen name for Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, who lives at West Asheville. And if you read "Call Home the Heart," you know that not only is it one of the best written "proletariat" novels of this century but is also a lyric expression of the Carolina mountain people. I am particularly eager to read the new novel.

Herald-Tribune
New York N Y
NOV 18 1935

The Book Union's selection for December, "A Stone Came Rolling" by Fielding Burke, is about a North Carolina mill town. Louis Kronenberger, reviewing it in the Union "Bulletin" says: "The feeling that has gone into this book . . . refuses to be squandered or misdirected or even to translate itself merely into pathos. It is feeling strengthened by intelligence and . . . the conviction that life is fundamentally messed up in America today; the conviction that even fine natures . . . cannot survive or even sidestep that mess by using the old prescriptions." The book will be published November 29.

Journal
Milwaukee Wis

Carolina Hill Country Is Scene of Fielding Burke's First Novel

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green & Co.

The beauty of the North Carolina mountain country and the squalor of the lives in its coves and on its peaks provide the contrasting background for this book and introduce to literary circles a new author, burdened with none of the awkwardness or diffusion of effort common to first novels.

Mr. Burke, on the contrary, proceeds with great directness in the telling of his story. If anything marks him as a newcomer, it is the earnestness and fervor with which he sets about his task. That hardly can be construed as a fault.

The story is the story of Ishma, daughter of the mountains and as straight and strong as the eminences themselves. Opportunities which might have come to Ishma – education, cultural advantages, beautiful clothes and training of her natural leadership – are denied her by that very quality of leadership, which holds her to the unproductive mountain farm, to her mother, a slovenly sister, a shiftless brother-in-law and their ever increasing brood of children.

Ishma rebels first when she marries not the man who would make her a "good, steady husband" but the man she loves, the song making son of an itinerant minister. Hard work from before dawn until after dark, repeated ill luck to thwart each bright hope and intention cannot dim Ishma's love for her husband. But they do ultimately catch her in a tortured moment and take her away from the hills with the substantial man her family would have had her marry.

Other women have run away with men, not for love of the man but just for the chance to get away. Ishma's strange elopement takes her to a mill town and there gives her the opportunity to become the leader, for which nature intended her.

The mill town sequence presents a highly interesting picture of the thing our Theodore Dreiser, Waldo Frank and other writers have been attempting to investigate – labor conditions in the south and what happens when the workers rebel and strike.

Mr. Burke writes with the air of authenticity about this strike. He gives his readers an exciting climax when Ishma in an old flivver rattles along a rough country through the night to the "lynching tree" and there by sheer courage saves a negro striker from hanging.

The story has the quality of arousing response in the reader – sympathetic excitement for the strike episode, hopelessness for the mountain farmers, an appreciation of the beauty of the mountains, seen only through the author's words – and so must be called successful.

NEW YORKER
NOV 2 - 1935

A Stone Came Rolling, by Fielding Burke. An impressive follow-up to "Call Home the Heart," this is a novel about a North Carolina mill town, the uncertainty that eats at the hearts of the more intelligent mill-owners, and the growing feeling of solidarity among the workers. Many of the characters are carried over from the previous novel. The book begins uncertainly and there are many weak, lush passages, but it gathers strength as it develops. Though the point of view is strongly Left Wing, dogma is subordinated, with rare exceptions, to the portrayal of human beings. (412 pages, $2.50.)

Times, "A story of compelling reality." Philadelphia Public Ledger, "A social epic." New York World-Telegram, "Continues to be our best bet among the love stories of the year." Atlanta Constitution, "The reader will not spend a dull moment." Saturday Review of Literature, May Lamberton Becker, "The noblest novel written by an American this year." Christian Science Monitor, "A novel of North Carolina that stands full sized and mature among many well written but slighter books about the mountain folks." Manchester Guardian on the English edition. "A thorough craftsman, better than anything in England . . . a book Arnold Bennett would like to have seen."

Praise was found everywhere for this book, in the many sections of the country. Much of it came from the critics of the South who rarely ever find anything worth while in Southern books. Elmer Davis, however, writing in the Saturday Review of Literature, used this work as a basic bit of attack on a red-baiting article called "The Red Peril." Davis liked the first 200 pages. He said they were well done, some of the finest reading in years, but the later half—the social and industrial conflict—was too much for his soul. One should not be surprised for Davis is a standpat and a professional scribbler. Mrs. Dargan's new book will be well received by the majority of critics, but there is going to be a terrific howl that it's "propaganda." Mrs. Dargan can only say that she has been honest in her portrait of the industrial battleground and its people.

Inquirer Phila Pa
Feb 27-32

Fielding Burke's Debut With "Call Home the Heart"

"Call Home the Heart", by Fielding Burke (Longmans, Green and Company), a new author, is a novel of breadth and power. The book has its ups and downs; it is not consistently absorbing, but Mr. Burke has succeeded in creating at least one truly great character, and in presenting a picture of two kinds of existence that in its clarity and vigor is peculiarly arresting.

"Call Home the Heart" is Ishma Hensley's story. Born in the North Carolina mountains, a deep-rooted love for the elemental strength and beauty of her surroundings was an essential part of her character. But even while she shouldered the burden of her family and wrested from the poor farm enough to keep them alive, she had the vision of a larger life beyond the hills. Her marriage to Britt Hensley, although her love for him never lost its power, was only the prelude to four more years of desperate struggle. At first, natural beauty, and later, a great love, had satisfied her longing; but there came a time when neither could fill her needs. Her mind was "born for questing", and a passionate longing for a vision and understanding of the whole of life forced her away from the mountains to a mill town. In the poverty, the drabness and the tragedy of existence there she found new demands for all the strength and courage she could give. But the hills and Britt were always in her heart. Inevitably she was drawn back to them, happy in her love, but still unsatisfied.

Ishma is a big person. All through the novel she stands head and shoulders above the people around her. The book is hers, and she brings to it a freshness, a breadth and a power that put it far above the ordinary run.

Life in the mountains and in the mills is presented in all its harshness. But Mr. Burke never descends to the merely sordid. The weakness of his book is that he allows it to become a treatise during the long presentation of a mill strike. Even Ishma is almost lost sight of for a time while the author discusses the problems of the strikers. It is an interesting discussion, but it detracts from the power of the novel. However this is easy to forget in contemplation of the whole. We can welcome Mr. Burke to the ranks of the novelists with real enthusiasm.

ANNE B. TOWNSEND

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.
NEWS
MAY 9, 1932

LIKES I

EDITOR: The daily book review by Harry Hansen running on the editorial page of The News is easily the best of its kind. Every book that he has so far recommended I have found to be interesting and modern, and, indeed, necessary, if one would understand what is happening in the world today. I refer especially to "Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke, and the review of A. Orage's "New English Weekly."

REVOLUTIONARY WRITERS FEDERATION

AMERICAN SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF REVOLUTIONARY WRITERS

114 West 21st Street, New York City — CHelsea 3-9306

Jan. 10, 1933.

Fielding Burke

Announced by Moissaye Olgin before 3000 gathered in Cooper Union to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Gorky's Revolutionary activities — an award to be repeated annually.

O.T.D.

REVOLUTIONARY WRITERS FEDERATION

AMERICAN SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF REVOLUTIONARY WRITERS

114 West 21st Street, New York City — CHelsea 3-9306

Jan. 10, 1933

Fielding Burke
% Longman's Green
55 Fifth Ave
New York City

Dear Comrade Fielding Burke:

We are very pleased to inform you that you are one of the three authors chosen in the Maxim Gorky Award for the three best American proletarian or revolutionary novels published during the past year.

The other two authors are Grace Lumpkin, author of "To Make My Bread" and John Dos Passos author of "1919".

With revolutionary congratulations,

Emery Balint.

Executive Secretary

Announced by Moissaye Olgin before 3000 gathered in Cooper Union to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Gorky's Revolutionary activities — an award to be repeated annually.

O. I. D.

AMERICAN SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF REVOLUTIONARY WRITERS

AMERICAN SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF REVOLUTIONARY WRITERS

114 West 21st Street, New York City CHelsea 3-9306

March 1, 1933

Dear Fielding Burke,

V.J.Jerome has informed me that certain Southern newspapers have publicised the Maxim Gorky award and completely minsinterpreted the actual facts. The publicity as printed in their columns states that Grace Lumpkin received the first prize and John Dos Passos and yourself received honorable mention. This is incorrect. The award did not establish any hierarchy of prizes. All three of the novels mentioned were found to be equally deserving, and the three authors are co-recepients.

The RWF is at present organizing the publication of a revolutionary quarterly, which I believe is destined to exert a decisive influence in the radical literary movement. We would be very glad to have you contribute to the magazine.

Cordially,

Philip Rahv

Org. Secretary

CM

Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, Mass.

August 3, 1932.

Longmans, Green and Company, Publishers,

New York City:

I am delighted to hear that there is to be an English edition of "Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke. It seems to me one of the greatest stories of modern times, and absolutely unique in character.

Yours sincerely,

Abie Stone Blackwell.

Herald-Sun
Durham
Raleigh News

4 M

Rebellion In The South

By ANTHONY BUTTITTA.

"To rebel is the first duty of the Southern writer at this moment of time when decaying standards and throbbing pressures are all a part of his problem," Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, who writes under the pen-name of Fielding Burke, declared last night at her West Asheville home where she has been correcting galley proofs on her novel, "A Stone Came Rolling," which will be published October 19, by Longmans, Green Company, of New York.

Fielding Burke is the author of "Call Home the Heart," a novel of the highlands and the current industrial crisis, which has received tremendous praise here and abroad. An English edition was published a year following the American publication in 1932. Jonathan Daniels, editor of the Raleigh News and Observer, writing in the Saturday Review of Literature, said of this brilliant work, "Perhaps the best novel yet written of the industrial conflict in contemporary America. And how long we have needed it!"

Rebellion of writers in this section of the country was the keynote sounded by Dr. Joel Spingarn, former Columbia University professor, at the Southern Writers' Conference which was held last month under the direction of the University of North Carolina extension division. Mrs. Dargan was one of the few headliners at the conference. At that time, she told Professor Spingarn, "I believe most of us are willing to become rebels, but the question that troubles us now is—how far can we go without being lynched?"

The South has always been a land of rebellion, Mrs. Dargan pointed out last night. Revolt is in the blood of the Southerner, beginning with the legendary Mecklenburg Declaration which preceded historic July 4 to the first shots of the War Between the States. And today, there is another occasion for rebellion, as important as these earlier efforts. Mill owners and mill workers are at each other's throats. There is poverty in the face of plenty. The present situation certainly comprises the raw elements of a struggle—drama.

The destiny of mankind is today being prepared on the industrial battlefield, Mrs. Dargan declared emphatically. It is the general theme of her new book in which she shows that it is as difficult for a good mill boss to run his mill today as it is for a bad mill owner. In industry — textiles, tobacco plants, furniture factories and North Carolina is full of them— men and women are interconnected more closely than they have ever been since the industrial revolution. Labor and capital on this battleground fight for their interests— wages and profits, respectively. The workers want a living wage, while the bosses assert themselves to gain power and to exert their will.

It is obvious that Mrs. Dargan's "A Stone Came Rolling" will be referred to as "propaganda" by many standpat critics and liberals. This will be said because the workers are presented as fighting a just rebellion, she said. These critics seem to forget that art can serve as an instrument of the class struggle as well as an instrument for backing the aims of the capitalist state—something it has done from the very beginning, Mrs. Dargan declared.

"Art to me has always been the feel and transmission of human experience," the writer said. The emotions aroused by the struggle of the workers in "A Stone Came Rolling" to emancipate themselves from economic enslavement and to create a new world for themselves is experience. It is decidedly more experience than the "flutter of an eyelid" which has occupied bourgeois writers for years and is considered by standpat critics as art. Still these same critics will call the struggle of workers to free themselves "propaganda." To the standpat critics only the experiences of the parasitic classes seem to constitute art.

Bourgeois writers, the average run of fiction makers today, write a class-conditioned work. It is as class-conditioned as the proletarians who write of the struggles of the American workmen. Art, however, varies with experience, Mrs. Dargan said, and today the experience

of the group is more important than that of an individual. Group experience has taken on a social and political meaning and it is more significant than personal themes. The theme of the strike in this novel comprises the general experience of a group whose aims are the same: a living wage. This is art in its tense reality, Mrs. Dargan said.

Years ago Mrs. Dargan wrote prose and blank verse plays on historical and Biblical subjects which were praised by leading critics here and abroad, including James Huneker, John White Chadwick, Charlotte Despard, Edmond Clarence Stedman, Jessie Rittenhouse and many others. John Chadwick referred to one of her poetic dramas as, "It is the high water mark in poetic drama since Shakespeare." This was a tribute to her play, "Carlotta," which portrayed the still unended struggle for Mexican independence. Two other plays were included in this volume which was first published in 1904. These plays are "The Poet," based on the life of Edgar Allan Poe, and "Semiramis" which was translated into Armenian.

A book of three other plays followed. A poetic drama in two parts, entitled "Lords and Lovers" which opened the volume. The second was "The Shepherd," a prose play, based on the Russian Revolution of 1905. The third was a poetic drama, "The Seige," with the local of Syracuse in the time of Dionysius. A third book of three plays followed, including "Kidmir," a story of the Crusades; "A Son of Hermes," a drama of Athens in the time of Alcibiades, and "The Mortal Gods," which was based on the Mexican Revolution of 1909, in which Americans fomented revolution in Mexico to gain concessions in the state.

Mrs. Dargan ceased writing plays at this time. The critics who had compared her to the finest that had been done since the day of Shakespeare forsook her for she had turned to a social problem—the Mexican revolution against American capitalists! Since 1912, Mrs. Dargan said farewell to the drama and turned her attention to poetry. She learned as early as 1912 that these same critics were class conditioned for the type of literature which they chose to call art. For years, she lived as a dirt farmer in Swain county, 12 miles from Bryson City, North Carolina. Then, she went abroad, returning from time to time to the farm.

"The Pathflower" was her first book of verse which was published in England by Dent and later in this country by Scribner's. This was followed by "The Cycle's Rim," dedicated to one drowned at sea, which has been compared by many critics as the finest expression of its type since Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Sonnets from the Portuguese." Here is the incarnation of passionate love and grief, and of the book, Mrs. Dargan said last night, "The best you can do with words is to put the outside of the thing." This was followed by a book of lyrics in 1922, entitled "Lute and Furrow." Her book previous to "Call Home the Heart" was a collection of mountain stories, entitled "Highland Annals," some of which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly and in Paul Green's "The Reviewer." Mrs. Dargan is at work on a new edition of this work at the present time.

Olive Tilford Dargan was born in Tilford Springs, Kentucky, of old Virginia stock which came pioneering into the West when it was opened for settlers. At the age of 17, she entered Peabody College and received her degree two years later. A year of philosophy and English followed at Radcliffe. Even then, the question she could not answer was: "Why must some go hungry while there is enough for all?" At Radcliffe, she met young Pegrim Dargan in their senior year. They were married and lived six years in New York. Then they came to western North Carolina in search of health and freedom. Illness followed and a long convalescence in Europe for Mrs. Dargan, and a tragic voyage to Cuba for Mr. Dargan. On this voyage in 1916, he was drowned. Mrs. Dargan returned to their farm, and in 1925, she came to West Asheville and has since considered this her residence address. In the meantime, she has spent time in France, Switzerland and New York.

Some of the comments which she had received by American critics on her brilliant novel, "Call Home the Heart," follow: The New York

Transcript Boston Mass
Feb 10-32

Call Home the Heart

Call Home the Heart. By Fielding Burke. $2.50. New York: Longmans, Green & Company.

RARELY do we discover a first novel of such genuine beauty, such depth of insight as is to be found in this tale of Ishma, the girl of the Carolina mountains, who, despite the sordidness of her home surroundings, manages to dream of better things and to set herself standards toward which to strive. That home of Ishma on the mountains is one of the bare, three-room dwellings which dot the landscape in the mountains of Carolina and Tennessee and it is crowded with human beings. Ishma has never been to school, first because ever since she was five she has been taking care of her sister Bainie's children and second because on the mountain sides it is harder for the authorities to keep track of the children. She has taught herself, however, and as Bainie's children go to school she learns the lessons with them. She learns to speak, too, as outsiders and not as the mountain people do. Her family laugh at her but they do not laugh too loudly as she grows up for Ishma is the best worker of the lot and more and more the slovenly Bainie and her lazy husband come to depend on Ishma to run the farm.

Ishma's early strong longing to get out, to go to a town or city, to work and earn for herself better opportunities is foiled by nature, which, despite her intentions, makes her fall in love with Britt. Her marriage at first seems only a delay in her plans for she and Britt believe firmly that by working and saving they can get away at least to a home of their own. Four years of work and illness and disappointments bring Ishma at last to the place where she runs away with another man out of sheer desperation. The only place, however, to which these untrained people can escape is to a factory town and to factory work, so that Ishma's experiences with the factory workers and their difficulties takes the place of her earlier dream of life away from the mountains which she loves. There is in Ishma with all her other qualities a passionate love of beauty and a perception of the fact that beauty is a food for her spirit. Even as a child she has needed the Sundays alone on the mountain to fill her with strength for the week days of hard work. After a time in the city she knows that she must come back to the mountains. Indeed the surprising power of the story lies in the author's understanding of the implacable struggle going on in Ishma herself. The story is rounded to an ending with Ishma's return to the mountains and to her husband and child, but we do not feel this is the real end of Ishma and all the wealth of beauty which is in her. There is a haunting power to the story which promises well for the author's future. D. L. M.

BOSTON, M...
Christian Science Monitor
NOV 27 1935

All Ye People

A Stone Came Rolling, by Fielding Burke. New York: Longmans. $2.50.

THREE YEARS AGO, when Fielding Burke wrote "Call Home the Heart," that strangely stirring novel aroused much comment. Now, a sequel is published. "A Stone Came Rolling" is another tocsin calling out, in addition to a warning, a plea for love, wisdom and courage. Again Fielding Burke is intent on the ethical problem of "the righteous adjustment of self to the social whole." She writes a dramatic story of strongly characterized individuals, but the drama of their lives has a universal social import which lends a compelling force to the book.

Ishma Hensley and her husband, Britt, are again the central characters, each governed by a strong ideal: to do their share toward making the world habitable for everyone, rather than for a privileged few. Ishma is the idealist, rampant, zealous, but not fanatic. Britt is always for the peaceable way. "A Stone Came Rolling" is the story of their part in the "revolution" in Dunmow, a Carolina mill town. The uprising on the part of the workers and unemployed alike against the millowners and bosses was one of the stones "rollin' through Dixie," sending out reverberations of a coming avalanche to the hopeful ears of Ishma.

The alarums in Dunmow were typical of nationwide episodes and deserve study because of their broad implications. Communism as an idealistic theory has undoubtedly gained adherents in America, and when a woman as good and fine as Ishma devotes her life to its furtherance, it is wise to examine her side of the shield. She is definitely on the side of the masses, advocating reform because for her and her comrades a changed world would be a better one. Unlike the upper classes,

they have no idols to be toppled, no customs to be uprooted, no values and standards to be castigated. A new world is ahead of them, and Ishma looks forward to what she terms the spiritual birth of the masses. She foresees it as not the beginning of chaos, but the end of it.

Fielding Burke's stirring presentation of conditions and ideals among the workers is different from the usual treatment. She is never bitter nor hysterical, in spite of the suffering and tumult she has witnessed. Her earnest plea for the working class is unusually effective, unmasking the abuses of a capitalistic system and forcing its adherents to recognize the need for reform. Communism, at the other end of the pendulum's swing, is also subject to criticism, but Miss Burke presents it only in its theoretical form. The abuses which are committed in its name, she fails to consider. Her picture is therefore only one-sided, with little constructive value, but it is undeniably cathartic. Society must do something for its millions of workers, and Miss Burke shows how the stone is already rolling; further, she affirms that the avalanche to come can only be salutary. Her book is instinct with hope.

M. W. S.

Potential Greatness.

The narrative, which is enriched by glowing descriptive passages, is weakened by propaganda. Even the characterization, which is remarkably effective, seems to suffer as the tempo of the book changes from the leisurely mountain pace to the hectic clamor of the mills. Ishma the union leader is a less convincing and a less appealing figure than Ishma the upstanding mountain girl gazing at beautiful distant horizons.

Fielding Burke writes with artistry, feeling and power. His work lacks restraint, but that quality he may acquire in time. And as he grows older he may take life a little less seriously. If he does, when he writes another book he may wake up one morning to find himself famous—the great novelist, for which America has been waiting all these years.

ecord
hila Pa
MAR 6 - 1932

Mills and Farms Of Carolina Hold Only Desperation

"CALL HOME THE HEART," by Fielding Burke; Longmans, Green & Co. $2.50.
Reviewed by JULIET LIT STERN.

THE heartbreaking struggle for existence in Carolina mountain farms and mill towns is movingly depicted in an extraordinary first novel by Fielding Burke, "Call Home the Heart."

Here is the story of the development of a sensitive, beauty-loving girl who grows up in a family of shiftless poor whites on an isolated mountain farm. Ambitious for a fuller and more gracious life, Ishma hesitates about marrying penniless Britt, much as she loves him. But the urge proves too strong. They marry and for a few brief months their life is an idyl.

With the coming of the first baby conditions grow worse. Misfortune follows upon misfortune until Ishma is beside herself. She feels like a trapped animal who would do anything to escape.

Runs Away.

At this moment an old admirer, Rad, offers her release if she will go away with him. She still loves Britt and has no feeling at all for Rad. But in sheer desperation she runs away.

Ishma and Rad go to the town where most of the people work in the mills. Ishma finds even more suffering among the mill workers than she had known on the farms.

On the farms men and women labor to overcome obstacles and difficulties that are a part of the great conflict between man and nature. In the mills men, women and children wear out their lives in a hopeless effort to compete with a merciless system.

System Impossible.

Ishma becomes a union leader. She is fired with enthusiasm for the great cause she represents. But a strike breaks out and she sees how terribly unfair and uneven the struggle is. She is forced to the conclusion that readjustment is not enough. The whole system must be scrapped.

Weary, hopeless and sick at heart she goes back to the mountains to seek peace and strength. There she finds the answer to her own problem at least.

"Call Home the Heart," although it is a study of poverty, suffers itself from an embarrassment of riches. In its more than four hundred pages is material for at least two novels. The love story of Ishma and Britt would make a book in itself, and a beautiful book, a finer book artistically than "Call Home the Heart."

Two North Ca

S. R. L. - Nov-30, '35

A STONE CAME ROLLING. By Fielding Burke. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1935. $2.50.

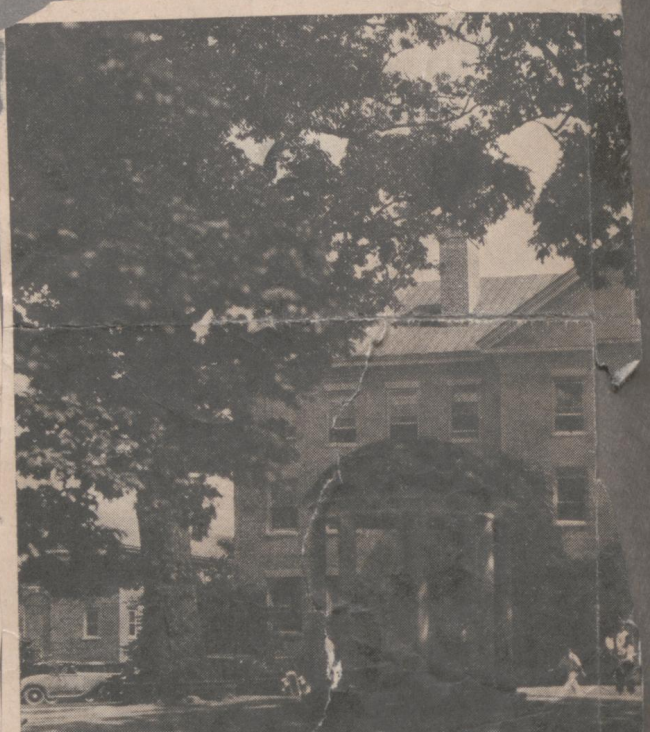
Reviewed by SELDEN RODMAN

THIS is less a novel than a slice of saga. Rapidly shifting from family to family and from town to country, the story embraces an entire community in North Carolina. Dunmow is a typical Southern industrial town, dominated by mill-owners and preachers. Its "proletariat," but recently drawn from the countryside, is of God-fearing native stock. Only since the depression, as wage-cut follows wage-cut, have the textile workers organized or rebelled. But most of them can still be aroused by religious exhortation and race prejudice to those excesses of reactionary violence for which the whole country blushes.

These people are already known well to the readers of modern fiction through the works of Faulkner, Caldwell, Grace Lumpkin, and William Rollins, Jr. But what distinguishes Fielding Burke, at least from her fellow Southern writers, is her kindliness of heart. She cannot see her townspeople and country folk as puppets of poverty, racial hatred, and lust. She sees positive forces at work among them, and she believes they are moulding new destiny out of their very poverty and defeat. This faith is summed up in the heroic character of Ishma Hensley, farmer's wife and strike leader.

The story of Ishma's mountain girlhood and marriage was told in Miss Burke's first novel, "Call Home the Heart." In the earlier work the emphasis was on Ishma as a mountain woman, with only a brief sojourn in the city to show her identification with industrial revolt. In "A Stone Came Rolling," Ishma's love of nature and her love for her fellowmen have merged. Hers is the sensitive poet-consciousness through which the author speaks. Hers also is the character, blending courage with gentleness, which most redeems from hopelessness the scene of strife and suffering in which she lives.

Fielding Burke, who has written for many years under the name of Olive Dargan, is native from way back. Her picture of a civilization and a social order is accurate and convincing; the reader has no difficulty in living the big textile strike, the Fourth of July barbecue, or the day-to-day farm existence. It is not so easy to realize the characters as human beings. Miss Burke can make us like or dislike people, but with a few exceptions she does not make us see them. However, except for such fuzzy characterization, and a certain lack of structure to the book as a whole, she has lived up to the high promise of her first novel. It is to be hoped that its chronicle will be carried further in another novel.



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Fielding Burke (Olive Tilford Dargan), Paul Green, an these pages, all hold degrees from th

and Tom Wolfe

Extract from

Manchester Guardian

16 SEP. 1932

MOUNTAIN AND MILL

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke. London: Longmans and Co. Pp. 432. 7s. 6d. net.

We needn't plume ourselves, but in darkest Carolina the strike at the cotton mills "had moved along a customary course; on the second day troops had been summoned to combat disorder that was practically non-existent," and a reasonable inference to be drawn from the conditions portrayed is that there exists in America to-day a life not more advanced than was English life in the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution. On the mountain farms a bare existence can be won on terms inhumanly hard, and mothers, ignorantly fertile, do field work. The mills are the alternative, with night-shifts and at wages conditioned by the fact that white labour operates under threat of replacement by black. There isn't much about negroes in the book, but what there is is significant. A negro, whose crime is that he has joined the union, is rescued by a heroic woman from lynching at the hands of men merely desirous to prove themselves good citizens, and, ironically and Southernly, it is the grateful embrace of the rescued negro's wife which finally sends Ishma, his preserver, back from the town to the mountains.

If the book is too long it is because Mr. Burke—a Radical, we take it, with leanings towards the Communist solution—is overanxious to illustrate cotton-town conditions and interrupts the story of Ishma by passages which read like extracts from the case-book of a sociologist. But each episode rings individually true, and, collectively, here is a terrible retort upon the boast of the millowners who claim, by [illegible] South, to have delivered the "po whites" from poverty. In any case there is no doubt about the people of the mountain country. When the grandmother objected to some Old Testament passage that "They're tellin' lies on Him now. God ain't like that. I know Him," we knew why for the preceding sixty pages we had been conscious of haunting familiarity. The actual origin of the inhabitants of the Carolina mountains may be this or that, but spiritually they come from Lancashire. The play "Sun Up" left a similar impression; and it is odd that to-day their town industry should be cotton. Britt, Ishma's husband, is simply a Carolina gormless lad of ours, and pride was in us as we read the epic description of his fight with the preacher who excommunicated her for desertion; also when Mr. Burke, subscribing to his theory that what's wrong with the poor is poverty, found capital for Britt by taking him to New York to make records of ballads and when Britt declined stage offers and returned to his plough again we called him cousin. Ishma's story, put crudely, is that of the country girl who dreams of cities, goes to one, and finds disillusionment; but she is a fighting dreamer, and the detail even of the mountain pastoral of the early part of the book is plotfully invented to define a stalwart character against a background of loveliness in landscape and feckless tenacity in her family. This is a considerable novel, sub-great, but its very fault—its excessive examination of life in a Carolina cotton town—should recommend it to those who also try to live by cotton.

H. B.

Tribune — Galveston

More in Praise Of Burke Novel

W. T. Couch, of the University of North Carolina Press, gives his impressions of "Call Home the Heart," in a letter to the author, Fielding Burke (Olive Tilford Dargan):

"Last night I finished reading "Call Home the Heart," and I can not resist the impulse to write and tell you what I think of the book. Our critics and advertising experts have mauled and misused the English language to such an extent that I find it extremely difficult to say what I really think,—I am afraid I have lost faith in the power of language to convey meaning—but some of this faith is restored to me when I read your book. I do not think one line of it escaped me, and it was clear and direct, sincere and honest, intelligent and wise and true from beginning to end. Perhaps you may have concentrated too many and too much of the genuine virtues in Ishma and Britt—perhaps you haven't given capitalism as much credit as it deserves; perhaps the story glows a bit too rosily in spots, perhaps the last half is propaganda—I don't care a fig if all these criticisms be admitted.

"The only other novel dealing with life in the South which I have read, and which, in my opinion deserves to be classed with yours, is Elisabeth Madox Roberts "Time of Man." And of course there is no basis for comparing your work here—the mode of treatment and the purpose of the works are entirely different. The basis on which I class them together is simply and solely that in my opinion they are the two best novels which have ever been written dealing with life in this region, and I believe they belong with the best that have ever been written anywhere.

"After reading 'Call Home the Heart,' I am more keenly disappointed than ever that we did not succeed in getting you to write one of the chapters in 'Culture Below the Potomac.' The point of view which you represent needs to be repeated endlessly and in as many places as possible. If I were not convinced that you know your people thoroughly, that you have some real understanding of the forces which are moulding and warping life today, that you have the gift of expressing your views honestly and directly without shillyshalling, and that your views are endowed with that importance which comes only through intelligent and honest study and observation—then I would not be so disappointed over our failure to have you as a contributor. There are several pages in 'Call Home the Heart,' which describes life on mountain farms and in mill villages in exactly the way we want this life described in chapters in 'Culture Below the Potomac.'

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"Call Home the Heart," is published by Longmans, Green & Co.

'Fielding Bur
Mrs. Olive T. I
Publishers



Times — Asheville

Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, of West Asheville, widely known poet, playwright, and short story writer, is the author of "Call Home the Heart," much discussed recent novel of the western North Carolina mountain people, which was written under the nam de plume of "Fielding Burke."

This was disclosed by the publishers today, with Mrs. Dargan's consent.

Since the novel was published a few months ago by Longmans, Green and company, New York, it has been the subject of wide comment—most of it highly favorable—by critics, authors, and other members of the literary circles in New York and elsewhere over the country. There has been much speculation, too, as to the identity of the author, most of the guesses proving to have been erroneous. Today's announcement was the first definite statement from either Mrs. Dargan or the publishers as to who wrote the novel

The Reader's Guide, conducted by May Lamberton Becker in the Saturday Review of Literature, in the March 5 issue complimented highly the author of "Call Home The Heart," with the assertion that "the noblest novel by an American this year is about a mountain woman: "Call Home the Heart', by Fielding Burke. Someone sooner or later," the reviewer went on to say, "is bound to compare it with 'The Good Earth,' and it is indeed of this type, no more to be hurried than a sunrise, no

(Continued on Page 3)

Tribune – Galveston

More in Praise Of Burke Novel

W. T. Couch, of the University of North Carolina Press, gives his impressions of "Call Home the Heart," in a letter to the author, Fielding Burke (Olive Tilford Dargan):

"Last night I finished reading "Call Home the Heart," and I can not resist the impulse to write and tell you what I think of the book. Our critics and advertising experts have mauled and misused the English language to such an extent that I find it extremely difficult to say what I really think,—I am afraid I have lost faith in the power of language to convey meaning—but some of this faith is restored to me when I read your book. I do not think one line of it escaped me, and it was clear and direct, sincere and honest, intelligent and wise and true from beginning to end. Perhaps you may have concentrated too many and too much of the genuine virtues in Ishma and Britt—perhaps you haven't given capitalism as much credit as it deserves; perhaps the story glows a bit too rosily in spots, perhaps the last half is propaganda—I don't care a fig if all these criticisms be admitted.

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'Fielding Burke' Is Mrs. Olive T. Dargan, Publishers Disclose

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(Continued on Page 3)

"BURKE" SHOWN AS MRS. DARGAN BY PUBLISHERS

(Continued from Page 1)

more to be delayed than the precession of the equinoxes."

"Call Home the Heart" is available at Asheville book stores and at the Village Library.

Mrs. Dargan, in "Call Home the Heart," treats the mountain people, their perculiar customs and mountain dialect, differently perhaps from other authors who have attempted to portray the lives of the real mountaineers. Mrs. Dargan has spent a great deal of her life studying humanity, several years of that time she has spent among western North Carolina's mountaineers.

Given High Rating

Mrs. Dargan is rated among the first poets of America, and her writings are well and favorably commented upon wherever the critics raise their voices in praise or blame of those who write. While she was widely known years before, she received a great deal of publicity of a favorable variety with her book of prose, "Highland Annals." This is said to be the best book ever written about the southern mountaineers.

Among Mrs. Dargan's first books published were: "Semiramis and Other Plays," "Lords and Lovers and Other Dramas," "The Mortal Gods, and Other Dramas," "Lute and Furrow," and "The Cycle's Rim." The latter work was dedicated to her husband, Pegram Dargan, who was drowned in 1915. "The Cycle's Rim" won for Mrs. Dargan a $500 prize offered by the Southern Society of New York, for the best book by a southern writer.

Mrs. Dargan was the daughter of teachers, and at 13 years of age, was helping her father in his school in Missouri. At 14, she was a full-fledged teacher. Later, she attended the Peabody Normal school in Nashville, Tenn., and still later Radcliffe college at Cambridge, Mass. She was married in 1898 to Pegram Dargan of South Carolina, after having come to the southland to regain the health she had lost in overwork in the school room.

Mrs. Dargan is a native of Kentucky.

She resides on Balsam avenue in West Asheville. At the present time, Mrs. Dargan is spending a vacation in New York, and expects to return to Asheville in May.

According to the publishers, "Call Home the Heart" is already entering into its fourth printing and is proving exceptionally popular.

THIS CLIPPING FROM
RENO, NEV.
STATE JOURNAL
DEC 2 - 1935

By THE BOOKIE

Outstanding for her ability to combine artistic expression with ideals of the class struggle, Fielding Burke is one of the most pleasing and persuasive writers of the ever-growing group of proletarian novelists.

Her "Call Home the Heart" was greeted by critics of all connections as a significant and impressive sign that a new author of distinction had appeared on the American literary scene. Her new novel, "A Stone Came Rolling" (Longmans Green), add to her stature as a writer for it is evidence that Olive Dargan (for that is her real name) is not a one-book author and that the success of her first effort has not swerved her from devotion to social reform.

"A Stone Came Rolling" concerns the same people with whom the reader became acquainted in Miss Dargan's first book—Ishma and Britt, Bly Emberson and his wife Verna. The background is the southern mill town of Dunmow and the theme, the conflict between mill workers and mill owners. To this reviewer's regret, Miss Dargan has allowed her characters to come between herself and her most compelling material—the social unrest that culminates in strikes and death. Her men and women seem shadowy figures playing unreal parts when concerned with personal relationships of no social significance. But when they appear as elements in the stirring labor struggle, then they take on color and dimension and vitality. This characteristic is due, of course, to the fact that Miss Dargan writes with genuine feeling and sincerity when she is dealing with the movement which moves her most strongly. That is one salient mark of the proletarian novelists—they are more concerned with life and growth of the cause than of the individual human being.

This is understandable, of course, and largely true of every political activity since the beginning of time. But as far as literature is concerned, it will not be until the proletarian novelists integrate the expression of their ideals with first-rate character creation that they will reach and convert the mass of readers.

Taking "A Stone Came Rolling" at its face value as a novel pure and simple, it is less than remarkable, but taking it as an expression of faith and translation into fiction of a great human movement it becomes important. And allied with this importance is a moving and eloquent effort to end suffering and create a new world. For these reasons, read "A Stone Came Rolling."

EVENING POST
Charleston, S. C.
APR 9 - 1932

Reprinted in Atlanta Journal and Observer

REMOVAL OF UNION COUNTY

"Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke (Longmans, Green, $2.50) is a realistic and sensitive narrative of a woman's struggle against poverty and against her own passionate nature. Its opening chapters can be ranked with those of Ellen Glasgow's "Barren Ground." In fact the heroine Ishma is not unworthy of being compared with Hardy's Tess. Despite its many excellences, however, the book falls short of fulfilling the promise of its opening pages. In this chronicling the development of Ishma, the mountain girl, the author leads her down out of the mountains into a mill village there to have her soul tried in a loveless union and to win freedom and fulfillment through her service in a labor strike. But as soon as the new millieu is reached the author shifts her point of emphasis from the character of Ishma to isms and flattens the whole story into a novel-with-a-purpose mood. Great chinks of doctrinaire discussion are wedged in and characters are inserted and used like puppets to show the different phases of the labor problem. Thus the author Fielding Burke preaches and forgets to write. It is a little as if Hardy had stopped the story of Tess and indulged in chapter after chapter on the wrongs and oppression of milkmaids.

It is not that the heroine's experience with capitalism and communism has no place in her development. It is essential to the story that she should break from her bickering family and her hopeless struggle and impetuously try her wings in the "big happy world." It is essential to the development of her character that she should grow in compassion through serving others and that she should become aware of struggles beyond her mountain horizon. But in this part of the book the aloofness of the artist is violated. So earnest and convinced in doctrine is the author that he becomes bent on convincing the reader into the bargain. The characters become puppets and mouthpieces only. Endless argument and exposition are interrupted by half-heartedly dramatic incidents. One ceases to believe in Ishma, the woman, for she is now overshadowed by Ishma, the intelligent communist.

* * *

The story of the North Carolina textile strike is herein told with a courage and bitter conviction remarkable in social writing by a southerner. As journalism it is much more effective than Mary Heaton Vorse's "Strike." As a piece of special pleading it shows great clearness of vision and faith in the future of mankind. But "Call Home the Heart" is more than a novel-with-a-purpose. It is a poetic and beautiful story and as such should be unmarred by special pleading and journalistic writing.

The story begins with young Ishma spending on her mountain home the abounding energy she inherits from powerful old Grandma Stark —she of whom the neighbors used to say, "Come jedgment, Granny Stark'll send Gabe about his business an' go livin' right on. She ain't ever meanin' to die."

Ishma has her father's questing spirit. "A fidgety man,'" he was, so her mother said. "Ay, he wuz never satisfied. Always seekin', an' no name fer it . . . I've wondered sometimes why he didn't put out an' leave when he wuz able to walk off." And that is what Ishma decides to do, 'walk off" as Steve her brother has done. This resolution, so easy to make, falls before her tense warm love for her mountain husband Britt. Then follows a struggling balked existence, the two trying vainly to pull free from the cramped crowded house, the scolding mother, sick sister and squalling younguns. Julie, Britt's partner in ballad duets, stirs up jealousy in Ishma, and when the unsuspecting Britt urges that they turn their music to financial account, Ishma, pregnant for the third time, touchy and miserable, fires up and refuses such doubtful relief. In her desperation she sees their crop burned in a forest fire and the last hope of freedom seems to be the still-loving Rad, Britt's rival.

"She turned to him, though she didn't see him. The wall has a gate. Here was a way to open. At that moment Rad was hardly a human being to her. He was a friendly force who would help her turn the lock and let her pass out . . . The side of her face toward the lantern shone as if light were quivering through the skin . . . She began walking down the road. Her feet were light, her shoulders high. "'Fast, Rad, fast,' she said, walking before him."

* * *

In the mill village of Winbury, where Rad takes her, Ishma learns bitter disappointment with the bright things that beckoned her. Yearning for Britt and the mountains, she still holds to her bargain with Rad, who is fathering her sickly baby. To still her rebellion she finds an outlet for her energies in helping the mill people and listening to their wrongs. A young mountain doctor arouses her intellectual interest in social problems, and the leaders of an impending strike enlist her help. Then comes an automobile accident which kills her child. When Rad is forced to pay her hospital bills (the mill owner desiring not to "pauperize" a thrifty workman), Ishma gives up her plan to return to Britt and goes into the mills

EVENING POST
Charleston, S. C.
APR 9 - 1932

The Literary Lantern

By ELIZABETH LAY GREEN

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to help work off Rad's debt. There she begins to work feverishly for the new union and a new strike. Rad is gotten rid of by the simple expedient of neglect and another woman. But this freedom does not immediately return Ishma to Britt. She must first suffer and learn brotherhood with the other strikers. Then comes an attempted lynching in which Ishma suppresses her race prejudice and frees the negro victim, but is unable to suppress an animal distaste against negro gratitude. The revulsion that follows reveals her to herself as a passionate, unsuppressed soul. Suddenly her desire is greater than her zeal for her fellow man. She turns to Britt.

"She was in the flush of flight, resolute, triumphant, in a way, her face set to her heart's desire, unconfessed but known. Let the world behind her take care of itself. Under that flood her mind lay helpless. Against it she had no power."

That is really the end of the story. But there follows a complication. Ishma mistakes Julie's love of Steve for an old-time attachment for Britt. The bitterness of her suddenly flaring jealousy reveals still stronger her passionate desire for her lover, her son, and her mountain home. With only a passing thought for her new mill people she turns her heart homeward to Britt and a life in the hills.

Fielding Burke has shown in this book a poetic use of the mountain dialect and a humorous understanding of the picturesque qualities of his material. He has created several notable lifelike characters, among them Ishma, the strong, and Rad, the weak. The future work of this novelist will be awaited expectantly.

* * *

From Harry Hansen's Review of "Letters to Harriet" (noodge)

Of the poets in this Eastern group Robinson at-
ned fame and a measure of worldly success;
rcy Mackaye turned to masques and pageants
d remained faithful to American themes.
Olive Tilford Dargan was one of this poetic
cle. Her growth is the most interesting. Today,
ler the name of Fielding Burke, she is carving
ew career as a novelist of economic conditions
Southern textile towns, but she cannot write
nout poetic expression, as her latest novel,
Stone Came Rolling," fully shows.

* * *

INQUIRER
PHILADELPHIA, PA.
FEB 27 1932

Olive T. Dargan

Fielding Burke's Debut With "Call Home the Heart"

"Call Home the Heart", by Fielding Burke (Longmans, Green and Company), a new author, is a novel of breadth and power. The book has its ups and downs; it is not consistently absorbing, but Mr. Burke has succeeded in creating at least one truly great character, and in presenting a picture of two kinds of existence that in its clarity and vigor is peculiarly arresting.

"Call Home the Heart" is Ishma Hensley's story. Born in the North Carolina mountains, a deep-rooted love for the elemental strength and beauty of her surroundings was an essential part of her character. But even while she shouldered the burden of her family and wrested from the poor farm enough to keep them alive, she had the vision of a larger life beyond the hills. Her marriage to Britt Hensley, although her love for him never lost its power, was only the prelude to four more years of desperate struggle. At first, natural beauty, and later, a great love, had satisfied her longing; but there came a time when neither could fill her needs. Her mind was "born for questing", and a passionate longing for a vision and understanding of the whole of life forced her away from the mountains to a mill town. In the poverty, the drabness and the tragedy of existence there she found new demands for all the strength and courage she could give. But the hills and Britt were always in her heart. Inevitably she was drawn back to them, happy in her love, but still unsatisfied.

Ishma is a big person. All through the novel she stands head and shoulders above the people around her. The book is hers, and she brings to it a freshness, a breadth and a power that put it far above the ordinary run.

Life in the mountains and in the mills is presented in all its harshness. But Mr. Burke never descends to the merely sordid. The weakness of his book is that he allows it to become a treatise during the long presentation of a mill strike. Even Ishma is almost lost sight of for a time while the author discusses the problems of the strikers. It is an interesting discussion, but it detracts from the power of the novel. However this is easy to forget in contemplation of the whole. We can welcome Mr. Burke to the ranks of the novelists with real enthusiasm.

ANNE B. TOWNSEND

GALVESTON TRIBUNE

-:- BOOKS and WRI

Edited by George A. Seel

Fielding Burke Presents Novel of Unusual Beauty, Power, and Literary Value

CALL HOME THE HEART, by Fielding Burke . . . Longmans, Green & Co., New York.

Here is an authentic contribution to American literature. In "Call Home the Heart," Fielding Burke not only gives us a love romance calculated to stir a responsive chord in the hearts of a vast audience, but an effective piece of economic propaganda as well. The name of the author, Fielding Burke, will be new to readers of this page. The name of Olive Tilford Dargan, however, is not unknown to the cognoscenti. Mrs. Dargan, who is a frequent visitor to Texas, is a distinguished poet and playwright. "Call Home the Heart" is her first venture into prose fiction on an extensive scale, and will, we believe, mark a turning point in her career. Novels as sound, as interesting, as clean, and as good as this are few and far between. It has all the earmarks of a masterpiece.

"Call Home the Heart" has power. It has a beauty of phrase, of expression and of thought that at times reaches almost lyric intensity, and on occasions the author goes back to her earliest and dearest love, poetry, to reach ecstatic heights. Its theme is ageless, the yearning of humankind for a better, less sordid, a richer, less pinching life. How many slaves of desk and plow, of bench and kitchen, there are who aspire to things beyond the horizon, who live on hopes which may never be fulfilled. Caught in the net of circumstances, conscious of responsibility to others which they may not shirk, they follow the treadmill round of duty.

"Call Home the Heart" is the story of Ishma Waycaster, a high-spirited girl of the North Carolina mountains, who sought escape from a barren mountain farm in a mill town; of her participation in a terrible strike, and of her return, baffled, to the comparative peace and security of the mountains. It is a story in which there are all the elements of human drama—tragedy, pathos, humor, love, written as only a sensitive writer, keenly sympathetic with the varying moods of the human heart can write.

"Call Home the Heart" is a book which not only stirs the heart—it stirs the mind. It is a book which may do for industrial slaves what "Uncle Tom's Cabin" did for the salves of the Old South.

In New Milieu



Olive Tilford Dargan, poet and playwright, whose first novel, "Call Home the Heart," written under the name of Fielding Burke, marks her as a prose writer of extraordinary gifts.

Times Los Angeles Calif
Mch 6 1932

FIRST NOVEL VIBRATES WITH ELEMENTAL COLORS

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green & Co., New York.

The mood of detached appraisal is usually an easy one for the reviewer to maintain. But three or four times a year a book appears that makes it difficult to remain calm. One of these stirring books is just out. It is "Call Home the Heart" by Fielding Burke, a powerful story of a Carolina mountain girl who cherished the vision of a life filled with effort and opportunity, with beauty and enlightenment.

Ishma lived in the crowded three-room cabin her enterprising great-grandfather had built. Her widowed mother, her older sister and a troop of nieces and nephews kept the place noisy and disordered. From it Isthma escaped Sundays to the high wooded hills, where she was happy in "a world of tumbling waters and wild odors." The rest of the time she waged relentless battle on slovenliness and shiftlessness.

As Ishma approached womanhood, she began to realize that she could never bring order and harmony into the family. And she began to plan escape into a bright, strange world where energy might win through to the lovely way of life she believed possible. For long she withstood the wooing of the provident Rad and the guitar-playing Britt. It was the latter who stirred her senses and tempted her to give up her dreams. How at last Britt won her is a dramatic episode which vibrates with all the elemental colors of youth and love.

The endless struggle failed to break Ishma's spirit. She rebelled against squalor, against her sponging and quarrelsome family, against that in her blood that bound her to Britt. At last she abandoned all she loved and all she hated. She left her mountains and her husband and went to a mill town.

Drawn into the hard life of the workers, she fought with them in a strike, nursed the sick and fed the half-starved children. While the life in the mills is pictured with vividly illuminative detail, the author's interest is here transferred from Ishma to social injustice, with a weakening of the story. But he has such tenderness and depth in character delineation, such masterly technique in marshalling his incidents and such fervor in presenting them that he stirs and delights his absorbed reader. A most unusual first novel.

North Carolina in Books

A Cross Country Section:

By Archibald Henderson

survey, with but the barest comment on the individual works.

Fiction

Take fiction, to begin with. Here is a noble novel, "Call Home the Heart" (Longman, Green and Co., N. Y.), by Fielding Burke—a pen-name for the highly gifted Olive Tilford Dargan upon whom the University of North Carolina conferred an honorary Doctor of Letters some time ago. It is a rich and human, if somewhat too heavily "documented," study of our local textile troubles. And there is a finely written if somewhat inexpertly handled story of a North Carolina woman, symbolic heroine of people: Gerald Johnson's

Best Southern Story of Year

"The best story of Southern life of the year," is the way Harry Hansen, literary editor of the New York World-Telegram, describes "Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke (Olive Tilford Dargan) in announcing his favorite literary selections of the past year.

RECORD

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

MAR 6 - 1932

Mills and Farms Of Carolina Hold Only Desperation

"CALL HOME THE HEART," by Fielding Burke; Longmans, Green & Co. $2.50. Reviewed by JULIET LIT STERN.

THE heartbreaking struggle for existence in Carolina mountain farms and mill towns is movingly depicted in an extraordinary first novel by Fielding Burke, "Call Home the Heart."

Here is the story of the development of a sensitive, beauty-loving girl who grows up in a family of shiftless poor whites on an isolated mountain farm. Ambitious for a fuller and more gracious life, Ishma hesitates about marrying penniless Britt, much as she loves him. But the urge proves too strong. They marry and for a few brief months their life is an idyl.

With the coming of the first baby conditions grow worse. Misfortune follows upon misfortune until Ishma is beside herself. She feels like a trapped animal who would do anything to escape.

Runs Away.

At this moment an old admirer, Rad, offers her release if she will go away with him. She still loves Britt and has no feeling at all for Rad. But in sheer desperation she runs away.

Ishma and Rad go to the town where most of the people work in the mills. Ishma finds even more suffering among the mill workers than she had known on the farms.

On the farms men and women labor to overcome obstacles and difficulties that are a part of the great conflict between man and nature. In the mills men, women and children wear out their lives in a hopeless effort to compete with a merciless system.

System Impossible.

Ishma becomes a union leader. She is fired with enthusiasm for the great cause she represents. But a strike breaks out and she sees how terribly unfair and uneven the struggle is. She is forced to the conclusion that readjustment is not enough. The whole system must be scrapped.

Weary, hopeless and sick at heart she goes back to the mountains to seek peace and strength. There she finds the answer to her own problem at least.

"Call Home the Heart," although it is a study of poverty, suffers itself from an embarrassment of riches. In its more than four hundred pages is material for at least two novels. The love story of Ishma and Britt would make a book in itself, and a beautiful book, a finer book artistically than "Call Home the Heart."

Potential Greatness.

The narrative, which is enriched by glowing descriptive passages, is weakened by propagands. Even the characterization, which is remarkably effective, seems to suffer as the tempo of the book changes from the leisurely mountain pace to the hectic clamor of the mills. Ishma the union leader is a less convincing and a less appealing figure than Ishma the upstanding mountain girl gazing at beautiful distant horizons.

Fielding Burke writes with artistry, feeling and power. His work lacks restraint, but that quality he may acquire in time. And as he grows older he may take life a little less seriously. If he does, when he writes another book he may wake up one morning to find himself famous—the great novelist, for which America has been waiting all these years.

Harpers Magazine April 132 Hansen



"CALL HOME THE HEART"

Fielding Burke has made an extraordinarily successful use of the backgrounds of North Carolina life in his novel, *Call Home the Heart.* (Longmans, Green.) Here is the life of the mountains and of the mill towns, here are people trying grimly to conquer in the fight for existence on the barren farmlands and in the cotton mills, and yet the whole story deals with one individual's emotional response to such opportunity as her spirit demands. *Call Home the Heart* is one of the most satisfying love stories I have read in a long time. It tells how Ishma Waycaster, who lived up among the hill people, was able to follow her heart whither it led—first into matrimony with Britt, the farmer; then down into the valleys with Red Bailey; then into the wider loyalties of human co-operation as the union was organized among the mill hands. And finally, after having her fill of union, Communism, and the men who represented new theories of economic life, back to the hilly trail and to Britt once more—a woman of understanding and generosity, and always the strong figure of the book. And thus, although we get a clear picture of the simple life of the hills, its conventions, drudgery, and suffering, and although we see what happens in the mill towns and what rosy promises are held before the mill hands by the Northern organizers, we never lose sight of Ishma; for the story is not about mountaineers and mill hands so much as about one woman's heart—a woman who learns as she experiences life in all its forms, and returns home assuaged.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

BOSTON, MASS.

A Heart Divided

Call Home the Heart, by Fielding Burke. New York: Longmans, Green. $2.50.

MR. BURKE has written a novel of North Carolina that stands full sized and mature among many well written but slighter books about the mountain folk. "Call Back the Heart" is complex. It is weighted with an argument that involves even communism. It is tragic, it is humorous, it is beautiful, it is a document in American economic history, and it is the story of an unusual yet thoroughly human character. The book, for all its burden of economic problems, is the story of Ishma Waycaster's struggle with her own heart.

Ishma was a mountain girl. From childhood she had carried the burdens of her family. Only against song-loving Britt Hensley she could not hold out. She married him when her reason and her ambition told her that it was folly to stay in the mountains. Still, with Britt she had hopes. If they worked hard and were thrifty, they could bring the farm back. They could raise blooded stock. They could be somebody. Then Ned was born, and the twins. Hope of lifting herself and her family out of the struggle for a mere living was constantly deferred. Ishma and Britt alone might climb up, but they were repeatedly pulled back by their loyalties and generosities, and by their children.

After four years Ishma ran away. She went with Rad Bailey because that was the only way she could find to go. She still loved her husband, but Rad could take her out of the mountains.

In the town where she had expected to find betterment, she found instead squalor of another and more unlovely sort. Among the millworkers she found plenty of work for her superb strength and loving heart. She, too, became a millworker and threw herself into the relief work incident to a prolonged strike.

More than half the book is occupied with Ishma's life in the mill town. It is written in words that might easily burn holes in the pages. Ishma gave herself to the cause of the strikers; and then, in a moment of realization, saw that only part of herself was there to be given. Another part was back in the mountains with Britt, and her little boy. Having fulfilled her obligations to Rad, she left the strike in midcourse and went home to the mountains. Britt was waiting for her, and with lighter burdens in the household, with more knowledge, the two joined forces again to make their way up.

The book does not satisfy, because a divided heart like Ishma's has not come to a wholly satisfactory conclusion. Better than satisfaction is the admiration and the thought that it stimulates.

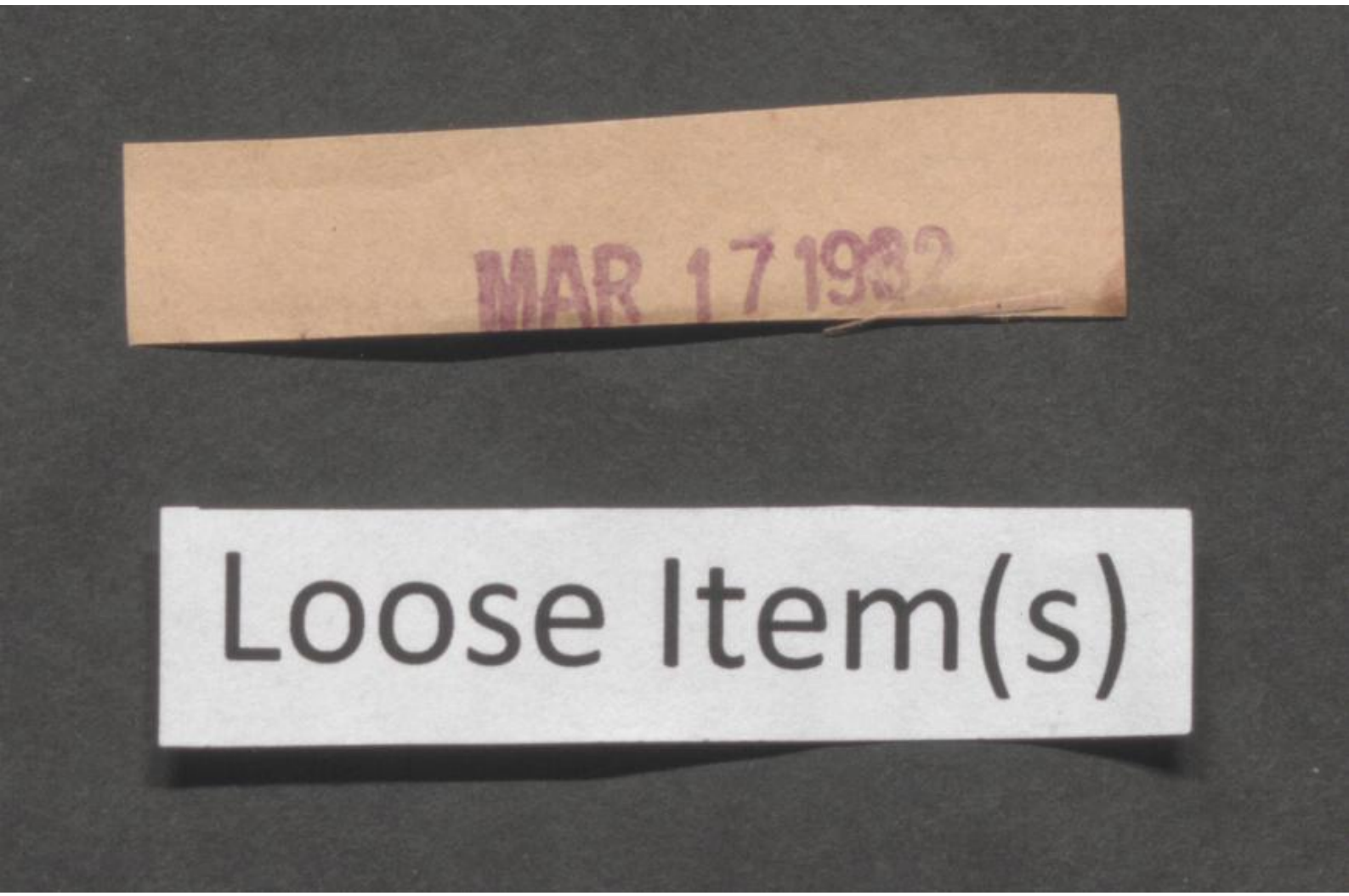
EVENING POST
NEW YORK CITY

A Calendar

Here is a list of new books whose worth has been tested in book store sales and which contains many suggestions for additions to the library:

For Solid People

GOETHE, MAN AND POET, by Henry W. Nevinson (Harcourt, Brace).
GROVER CLEVELAND: A MAN FOUR-SQUARE, by Denis Tilden Lynch (Liveright).
CZARDAS: A STORY OF BUDAPEST, by Jeno Heltai (Houghton, Mifflin).
JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, by Silas Brent (Vanguard).
ONLY YESTERDAY, by Frederick Lewis Allen (Harper's).
THE RED ROOM, by Geoffrey Dennis (Simon & Schuster).
THE PURITAN, by Liam O'Flaherty (Harcourt, Brace).
CALL HOME THE HEART, by Fielding, Burke (Longmans, Green).
THE EPIC OF AMERICA, by James Truslow Adams (Little, Brown).
NIXEY'S HARLEQUIN, by A. E. Coppard (Knopf).
WAGES AND THE ROAD AHEAD, by James D. Mooney (Longmans, Green).
AMERICAN WRITERS ON AMERICAN LITERATURE, edited by John Macy (Liveright).


MAR 17 1932
Loose Item(s)

Citizen

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

FEB 20 1932

A Rich Literary Fabric

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke. 432 pp. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. $2.50.

Reviewed By
ANNE PERRY

For his first novel Fielding Burke has made a happy choice of material. His apparent familiarity with the North Carolina mountains and their people carries conviction, aided by a style of cleareffortless charm, a reassuring quality in a new writer in these days of purposely obscured meanings.

If Mr. Burke's sensitive appreciation of beauty in nature and character betrays him into making his central character, Isbma, too much of a super-woman, his passionate sympathy with the unfortunate keeps him to a sincere attempt to present the grinding realizes in the poverty-squeezed lives of his farmers and mill workers.

The story loses strength by being over-long. Ishma's adventure are told in leisurely detail from her girlhood of endless toil on a mountain farm, her love for and marriage to Britt, whose capacity for self-sacrifice and devotion strains the reader's credulity at times, her elopement with a former suitor as an escape from unendurable hardships, her efforts to help the oppressed mill workers in the city,, to her return to Britt. The conflict in Ishma's nature between a vital idealism a need to give to and help others, and strongly human instincts toward personal happiness finds a partial solution. The heroine's problem is involved with the larger question as to which is the better instrument for improving humanity's lot, material force, or spiritual reawakening? Can the ancient dream of Brotherhood only be realized through hate and bloodshed, or will such an attempt leave things not much better than they are now? Mr. Burke is enough of an artist not to give a direct answer

Gazette
Montreal, Canada

MAR 19 1932

A Novel of Carolina

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke, Toronto: Longmans Green and Company.

It is seldom work of such high quality as "Call Home The Heart," comes from the pen of a new writer. Every mark of experience and craft is evident in this story of Carolina, its mountains and its mill towns. It has breadth and depth. It is full of a great understanding of nature and humanity, and an unbounded sympathy with the struggle of the poor to live.

While the author's name gives no clue to the writer's sex, there is very strong internal evidence that a woman is responsible for "Call Home The Heart." It would be difficult to imagine a man so understanding as to depict in its minutest phases and mental attitudes the character of Ishma Waycaster, who became the wife of Britt Hensley. And the novel is entirely a novel about a woman, a child of the mountains with generations of good stock behind her. Ishma's pursuit of knowledge under great difficulties, her love for Britt Hensley, her married life with him, and her flight from the hard lot of a mountain wife to the equally hard lot of a mill hand in the cotton town, could only be described by a kindred nature.

Ishma's character is a blend of the strong with the weak, upright, but compromising when circumstances demand. Her physical and mental qualities drew men of various shades of character and ability into her friendship. Her warm heart and sympathy led her to side with the oppressed mill operatives and made her active on the union side. Eight years of her married life, four with her husband and four of separation from him, culminate in the compelling call home to the mountains of her childhood and reconciliation with the man of her first choice.

There is such a wide sweep in this remarkable novel that it would be impossible to cover it in a short review. But it is a story which bares life in its brightest and seamiest lights, and it is a revelation of the soil in which communistic doctrines take root readily. Whether it is read for pure pleasure or from the point of social study, "Call Home the Heart" is a remarkably good book.

Chicago Tribune
Mch 7 '32

Burke Writes Good Story of Mountain Girl

'Call Home the Heart' Has Dignity and Beauty.

BY FANNY BUTCHER.

"Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke [Longmans Green]. Published today.

REGULARLY, now and again, a new novelist discovers the gold mine of the mountain folk of the south and mints that gold into lucky pieces for readers. Fielding Burke is the latest of such literary diggers, and, it seems to me, one of the best, and "Call Home the Heart" a lucky piece for any reader.

It is the story of a mountain girl, Ishma, by name, who in her very presence reflects the mountains and the sky and the fresh, clear air. She is the kind of woman that men love once and forever. Her story is the story of the revolt of a sentient, ambitious human being against the rigors of life and of the conquest of love. It is a simple story and one that has been told many times before Mr. Fielding set it down, but in his telling there is dignity and a beauty and a strength which makes the story more than the usual mountain tale. There is as much drama in it as in any of the tales of the mountain people, and there is as much seething psychology [to mention the two opposing schools of mountain novel writing], but the reader is never conscious of too much happening in simple minds or in their environment.

Characters Speak Mountain Tongue.

Unlike Maristan Chapman, who writes her narrative in the same idiom that her characters speak, Fielding Burke confines his mountainese to the conversation of his characters. In speaking of Ishma's eagerness for self-improvement the author says: "She noticed that visitors in the mountains, who sometimes found their way to Cloudy Knob and commented on the native speech as 'quaint,' or 'really Shakespearean,' were careful to use nothing resembling it." The characters all talk that "quaint" or "really Shakespearean" idiom, which gives them and the book a flavor extremely piquant for most readers.

During the long minutely detailed story Ishma becomes a mill worker in a small city, and the author is lengthily concerned with the injustice of capital to labor, a concern just on the uninteresting side on account of its length. But the whole novel is done in such a manner, like the "lazily uttered, half finished words and twisted syntax" of the mountain speech, and the episode in the mill town takes its leisurely way through the pages.

EVENING POST
NEW YORK CITY
MAR 4 1932

Secrecy

LONGMANS, Green have been thrown into all sorts of conference huddles over Laurence Stallings's news from the South that Fielding Burke, author of "Call Home the Heart," is Olive Tilford Dargan, the poet. Secrecy, we understand, was even written into the Fielding Burke contract and the contract is being lived up to.

Miss Dargan's poems, published several years ago by Scribner's, include "Highland Annals," "The Lute and Furrow," "The Cycle's Rim" and others.

NEW YORK CITY
Sun
FEB 25 1932

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The Morrow company is enthusiastic about "Lonely Road," by Nevil Shute, which is announced for March 10. Nevil Shute is a pseudonym, "and no facts whatever may be given out about the author." It's an English story, so at least it may be hazarded that the author is an Englishman. Well! Fielding Burke is an American woman and there is a copy of William G. Shute's "A Modern View of the New Testament" (Macmillan) waiting for the first letter to tell us who she is.

• • •

APR 10 1932

Louisville Courier-Journal

Burning Questions

A Review By ANNA BLANCHE McGILL.

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green & Co. $2.50.

"In her mountain days the earth that had given her bread, had done more than feed body and spirit. It had made her part of itself. Fields, woods, cliffs, peaks, unbaffled waters and far horizons. Their essence was with her like a spatial self." This had once made Derry Unthank say: "You can't possibly get all of yourself inside" little houses. She asked: "What do I leave out?" "Why a mountain or two, some miles of deep wood and at least one waterfall."

The quotation indicates the author's frequently poetic, richly flavored, style and introduces Ishma Waycaster, heroine of this enchantingly named novel of the North Carolina mountains.

Ishma—elemental, ardent, her vigorous young body typical of the strength that cometh from the hills—early becomes a tribal burden-bearer. Her abounding vitality is suffocated by the crushing poverty and the deterioration of her family, dragged down-grade by ignorance and impoverishment. Liberation promises though that perennial fire-in-the-mountains-romance, followed by marriage to engaging, "ballit"-singing Britt, with his burnished head topping his robust shoulders. Alas, brief the sun of idyllic love, when shadowed by poverty, by the loss of Ishma's first children (twins), by a bickering family. Britt did not prosper and he was always hankering to go to the city on the chance of earning a few hundred dollars with his "ballits," his guitar and "frensharp." Desperation, the deadening pressure of four years' toil without respite, drive Ishma to seek escape beyond mountain walls. Rad, a poor-grained but tenacious former lover, offers the means, "She turned to him, though she did not see him. Rad was hardly a human being to her, he was a friendly force who would help her turn the lock and let her pass out." A blind lead, straining credulity—partly because of her desertion of her boy, Ned, and partly because of Rad's cheap strain, a rush-light to Britt's true flame.

The flight leads to a mill-town (Gastonia?), where if no other twig burgeens, the ancient tree of Good and Evil flourishes. Good signifies for Ishma more education. She learns about hygiene, service to others, human relations worthy and unworthy. She discovers evil, pain, trouble—even more harrowing than in the hills. A textile strike tragically initiates her into problems and conflicts.

At this point the author turns the novel into what smacks strongly of communistic propaganda. Ishma is inoculated through the social theories of young Doctor Derry Unthank, a fanatical figure of some interest. Her own experience in the mills and with the misery of the workers, especially women and children, make her still more of a partisan with the union strikers. Ugly episodes add the Negro element to the feverish drama of Southern industry. Through Ishma's humane intervention a lynching by union white men is averted. But Ishma melodramatically follows her service with an anti-climax. She violently strikes a Negro woman because of a revulsion—physical, racial.

Shame and disgust over the hideous incident, over what she feels her own inconsistency, drives Ishma from the mill-town. The mountains call home her troubled heart. And even more compellingly calls her ever smouldering love for Britt, whose worth has been heightened through separation and through contrast with Rad's lesser nature. Once returned to the mountains, the novel runs truer to literary form. It becomes less cluttered with the social theory and problems, so thick in the second part of the book as to suggest that they are its purpose.

This criticism allowed, and it is distinctly made, the book lives—even in the tumultuous communistic pages. Mountain life is rendered excellently—and freshly, despite the familiar stock materials; the tall tales, the quaint speech and customs, the "ballits." Here are the depleted, beaten old men and women and the sturdier types who suggest that the peaks are conducive to longevity; the vital young, like Ishma and Britt, and the pitiful young-old women crumbled too early by ignorance, childbearing, deprivations. Well drawn, too, are the social experimenter, the dilletante altruists like Virginia Grant, blind to real human needs. The quotation heading this review

Rochester Chronicle

illustrates the author's power and beauty of phrase. The dialogue is competently handled.

The book excites interest in the evidently gifted author. Distasteful to many as the chaotic pictures of the strike may be, it must be admitted that they leave a sharpened sense of smouldering conditions in certain Southern regions, as, unfortunately, elsewhere. They conjure the dark menace of forces inflammatory and dangerous to two races. They pose perturbing questions. What is the way out? Communism does not seem the way. Again the timeless challenge to put old, not dead, idealisms to practical work. Where is the army of peace, intelligent, resourceful, courageous enough to match strife's destructive battalions? Britt, son of the "riding preacher," tempered to poise and wisdom by honest toil and trial, sees a gleam:

> I want to tell you what I think about this helpin' the world business . . . It'll be a big turnover from misery to happiness, from ignorance to knowledge, from cruelty to love, and the Lord has got to have a hand in it. . . His power must get into men's hearts.'
>
> Ishma, too, had a vision:
>
> Every ugly life had its hidden war in the service of a dream . . . But suppose it could be released into life?—into growth? That bright yearning germ which no heart was without? What incalculable gain! Every man at his best . . . What streams of active beauty would flow into time. Time, which is creation's reservoir.

The First Reader — Harry Hansen
World Telegram

* * *

Elmer Davis on Literary Reds.

ELMER DAVIS attacks the "red peril" in literature and criticism in the current Saturday Review. He characterizes the argument that literature must be valued from a social standpoint, with a view of its usefulness to the common man, as incompatible with the position of the artist, who has no business with propaganda. "The red infiltration into present-day literature is a nuisance because it imports alien and irrelevant values. The communist standard of truth and beauty is incommensurable with all other standards, past and present."

He then analyzes "Call Home the Heart" as a book in which a fine artist failed because of her communist views. He thinks the first half is "one of the finest of American novels"; that the last half suffers from an injection of communist views. We failed to find such views obtrusive. The author, Olive Dargan, who calls herself Fielding Burke, has sketched the conditions of millhands with understanding, and possibly has not done so well by the employers, but her heroine's point of view is well sustained and completely convincing. There are three well-built American novels of this season which show the author as more than a filing clerk—"The Good Earth," "The End of Desire" and "Call Home the Heart."

mch 13 '32

Mainly Book G

Considering the Work of Some of the Writing, Some of the Lesser Lights an Matter.

GALSWORTHY seems to have discovered a trick, partly of writing and partly of publishing, that is a winner. It is perfectly legitimate and even works to the advantage of his readers while it is profitable to him. The first part of the trick consists in writing books in series of three, with or without the elements marking the later ones in a series as sequels. Then when each of the books in the embryo trilogy is on the down grade of sales, the three are published in one volume with a fetching title of a general nature and sales are stimulated. That is the second part of the trick. Here is a confession. We wish there were more novel writers capable of producing romances worthy of being reproduced in this manner. But this is wandering. What we started out to say was that Mr. Galsworthy has combined in a new trilogy which he calls "Worshipful Society" three novels originally published in 1907, 1909 and 1911 as "The Country House," "Fraternity" and "The Patrician." They are true Galsworthyan portrayals of society in England in the closing years of the Golden Age before the world-shaking war. It is a book that will be invaluable to students of the future who seek a true expression of the spirit of that time. (Scribner, $2.50). . .

"Call Home the Heart" by Fielding Burke is a moving story of life in the North Carolina mountains and later of an equally crude and harder life in a mill town of that region. It is a large section of the life history of Ishma Waycaster who "before she was seven . . . had joined the class of burden-bearers." How she was drawn from her mountain home to the town, and how she struggled for improvement in the condition of the workers even when the mountains were calling her back is told with a simplicity and reality that make the story epic. Unless we are mistaken, this will prove one of the great books of this and many other seasons. It goes into the heart of things that other writers have merely skimmed. There is about it a finality that leaves the reader quite breathless. (Longmans, $2.50).

DEMOCRAT CHRONICLE
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

Sat. Rev. of Lit - New York

FEB 20 1932

Mill Town

CALL HOME THE HEART. By FIELDING BURKE. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

FIELDING BURKE is not the first who has taken the industrial conflict in the textile industry in North Carolina a few years ago as material for a novel. He is the first who has given that conflict interpretation, not in the form of drab economic propaganda written in swift journalese, but in a powerful story of men and women, dimensional and vital because Mr. Burke has a true understanding of the people involved in that conflict and the rural life behind them. Unless we are facing a very happy year in literature there will be few books written in 1932 in so rich a spirit or about so moving a theme as his first novel, "Call Home The Heart." A book, wealthy in flaws, it is wealthier still in its indigenous story of the last of the old, hard-struggling rural America engulfed in the new bitterness of the barren town which held out promise of escape from the barren land.



OUNTAINS, BY HARRISON CADY.
" (American Art Dealers Association)

For Mr. Burke, the strike in Windbury (Gastonia, N. C.) is not fundamentally important. It is not a single bayonetting, a single sadistic beating of a striker by a deputy sheriff, which has caught the imagination of Mr. Burke. He is writing not about a strike but about a people. No mere industrial propagandist would have dug to such deep roots. No mere Communist would have given more than half of his book to building the rural life of the North Carolina mountains and in particular the woman's life of farm and house labor which has driven the stream of laborers into the mills. In the first 177 pages of the book there is no hint of economic propaganda, only a picture of mountain life with a sensitive appreciation of its beauty and an equally sensitive appreciation of its poverty and the hopelessness of young aspiration against Nature and the land.

Mr. Burke makes wholly understandable Ismalee Waycaster's flight from Cloudy Knob and her husband, whom she loves, with another man into the "big happy world." What she finds is Winbury. And Winbury is physial and spiritual starvation, enlivened by the excitement of movies and ten cent stores and vulgar peep shows. She finds the people of Winbury cheap, raw material, used quickly and cruelly. There is nothing abstract or theoretical about Winbury as Ismalee learns it in gradual bitterness and sympathy. It is concrete in individual human lives, as concrete as pellagra, as the "stretch out" system and scabs in the mills, as concrete as old, hopeless children and hopeless, childish men and women.

This picture of a North Carolina mill town is so unhappily veracious that many will see in it only a part of Mr. Burke's anti-capitalistic propaganda. Yet the picture is scarcely, if at all, overdrawn. The towns are heartrending in ugliness; the people are heartrending in their sodden helplessness. In his picture of the mill town just complaint might lie against Mr. Burke not as a propagandist who has falsified his scene but as an artist who has let his righteous indignation lead him into a betrayal of his art. This is true in spite of the fact that he seems to be writing Communist propaganda and that he is guilty of very nearly all the faults

which generally pervade the single viewpoint novel of the economic conflict. The poor are good; the rich are evil. The hero and the heroine, the liberal doctor, the Communist leader, are all drawn in sentimentality. Life is perpetually dark under capitalism and the promise of perfect life lies in the reign of the proletariat. Yet the book is never just a preachment.

Very definitely Mr. Burke flies unsatisfied from his own propaganda just as does his heroine who fought and then fled back to her mountains. That flight probably marks for Mr. Burke the beginning of escape from forthright indignation into the truer perspective of the artist. In this book, despite the sentimentality and hard indignation with which he draws his opposing characters, they are alive, and the world in which they live, both in mountain and town, is vivid, true, and important. Here is better than promise, for with all its faults "Call Home The Heart" is perhaps the best novel yet written of industrial conflict in contemporary America. And how long we have needed it!

FEB 29 1932

Book Marks for Today

"Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke, continues our best bet among the love stories of the year. But the novels of the "No Bed of Her Own" school outnumber the better books three to one. "Three in a Bed," "Nothing in Common but Sex" and "Free Lady" are some of the latest offerings, and after dipping into them we like to get right under a shower bath.

Mch 5, '32

Lewis Gannett
H—T—

And In Carolina

LIFE goes on in the Carolina mountains, too, in Fielding Burke's story, "Call Home the Heart" (Longmans, Green), but it flows deeper. This is the story of a woman who loved the mountains. Fielding Burke, whoever he may be, must have grown up where he could watch cloud-shadows sail across the mountainsides, and with the smell of fresh earth in his nostrils and the sound of a bubbling spring in his ears. He knows, too, what an aching struggle it is to make that shallow soil pay; how roving cows and rooting pigs and forest fires and the eternal weeds threaten every promised crop; and how sickness and death and children drink and eat up the pitiful cash returns.

Ishma Waycaster lives on in the reader's heart. She dreamed of her own log cabin—hers and Britt's—up by the Birch Spring on Cloudy Knob; but year after year went by; children came and her shiftless brother-in-law sold the heifer and the cows broke into the soy beans. Ishma, who had fought for life, finally broke away, though it meant leaving Britt behind. She loved Britt; she always loved Britt, as she always loved the mountains; but she needed to escape somehow, anyhow, from the pull of shiftless relatives and more children. The mountain chapters of "Call Home the Heart" have intense life, the more intense because it is life at once singing and aching.

Down in the mill town Fielding Burke's story takes on a less deep-rooted tone. (Perhaps because the mill towns themselves are less deep-rooted.) Ishma took to nursing the mill workers' wives and children, drifted into the workers' struggle, became an organizer for the National Miners' union. The story becomes the ghastly story of Gastonia, and a few pages read like a sermon preached by a real hillbilly suddenly converted to communism. Ishma finally escapes back to the mountains, where Britt is still waiting for her, and the fields are at last bearing crops.

A fairy tale? Perhaps; the link between mill town and hill country—Ishma plans to let the miners' children camp on the farm—is forced; but Ishma is real. So are the mountains; so is her love for Britt, and Britt's love for her.

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Illustrations from the jacket design of "Call Home the Heart"

Aside from the questioning caused by the ending, "Call Home the Heart," is a deeply satisfying book. It has the ingredients of a really great and enduring novel, all the power that a good artist draws from knowing his locale down to the last twig, and the breadth from a richly sympathetic mind working on vital material. Most other pictures of Southern mountain life dwindle into mere picturesqueness beside the obvious reality—humorous and beautiful as well as grim—of this one. These people have assumed in the last few years a significance which overshadows their idiosyncrasies. Mr. Burke has done bravely to recognize it and to give it the exciting treatment it deserves.





Illustrations from the jacket design of "Call Home the Heart"

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N Y Herald Tribune
Feb 21-32

People of the Mountains

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke . . . *New York: Longmans, Green and Company . . . $2.50.*

Reviewed by
MARGARET CHENEY DAWSON

WHEN the whole mental atmosphere is charged with argument, the way of literature must be difficult and defiant. Mr. Burke, whose first novel is "Call Home the Heart," has triumphantly solved the problem by centering his work around a character so magnificently real that she can walk through the midst of turmoil, absorbing its lesson and feeling its power without losing her identity or becoming wholly part of it. In the end she does run away from it. I think it is too bad about that ending. Yet maybe I am asking for a heroine instead of a woman; and it is true that her essential detachment saves her from becoming only a mouthpiece.

"Before she was seven, Ishma, the youngest child of Marshall and Laviny Waycaster, had joined the class of burden-bearers. . . . Six days of the week Ishma was merely a family possession; giving herself so effectually that no one suspected she was giving; so entirely she did not suspect it herself." This was in the North Carolina mountains, where bearing burdens is not a figure of speech. Yet Ishma, fighting proudly against slovenliness and ignorance, was no martyr. She developed, as she grew up, the profound and holy selfishness of a person with a great spiritual passion. She believed that beyond the hopeless squalor of the mountain cabins, even beyond the clutching beauty of the mountains themselves, there was a clearly defined meaning to life, and she meant to reach it. As the sole prop of a big and shiftless family she was almost indispensable, and time and again when it seemed that she might make the break something happened to force her generosity. Against the demands of an injured brother, a flock of hungry children, a whiney sister and a tough-spirited mother she tried to make herself hard. And especially she tried to hold out against the gay, songful courting of Britt Hensley. But her heart always betrayed her, and after long resistance she married Britt. They agreed to stay on with her family.

Then began one of those mighty struggles which by the quality of their heroism seem sometimes to justify the worst things in life. Britt and Ishma were going to *get ahead*. But they could not. The things that befell them would have exalted Thomas Hardy's soul, but they have an inevitability more harrowing than Hardy's tricks of fate. And at last Ishma broke under them. Dazed and cold with failure she followed her old suitor, Rad Bailey, down the mountain side, leaving Britt and her little son to face the endless rotation of miseries.

The next four years of her life were spent in a mill town and the many experiences that piled upon her—the discovery that she still loved Britt, the loss of a girl baby, the first encounter with town life—were climaxed by the great strike in which she became a leader. The coming of communism to workers of the South; communism as shaped by some of the fiercest individuals, the fullest blooded Americans, the most sincerely religious body of people in the United States—this is a phenomena which Mr. Burke has borrowed from history and a story which he makes as stirring as the reality which is at this moment being enacted. It is an intensely interesting chapter, and one is divided between admiration for Mr. Burke's singleness of purpose and anguished disappointment at the anti-climax when he swerves the story away from this field again. He is right, no doubt, to insist on putting the final emphasis on what communism did to Ishma rather than on her contribution to the movement. Perhaps he is right, too, in making her flee in sudden, mad dismay back to her beloved mountains. Yet her return to her home is not the perfect rounding off that it should be. It is very pretty, too pretty. There is Britt, waiting and adoring still, and there is her son, grown tall and sturdy. Through the son she will reach her comrades, he shall be her offering to them, for she will teach him. This is her consolation. This conclusion may be "true to life" in general, but for the first really great figure to stride onto this new scene in fiction it is rather a let-down. It does not seem true to that particular fraction of life known as Ishmalee Waycaster.

WINSTON SALEM, N. C.
JOURNAL

DEC 1 - 1935

A STONE CAME ROLLING. By Fielding Burke. New York: Longmans, Greene Co. 412 pp. $2.50. 1935.

THE FIRST exposure of the soul of the Piedmont country is a militant appeal to industrial and spiritual leaders to do something, to do an obvious something, to preserve a beauty inspiring and fundamental. It is, too, Thank God, a book which is a consummate work of art, a sympathetic interpretation couched in the words of a poet who is living the life of the people she put in a book.

Piedmont Carolina

* * *

OUR OWN FOLKS

In this book, the first we have read of our own Piedmont country, Dunmow must be Burlington in the time of the textile strikes just a short time ago. All of the descriptions fit that town, but they fit in part, in main part too, our own Winston-Salem and any one locality in the shadow of the Blue Ridge. The people of the book are your own families, whether your skin is black and you live in the Bottom, whether your folks pushed a plow so that you could go to town to work in the mills, whether you were born with a white collar around your neck and so were entitled to lounge on the fringe of social activities, or whether your old man took the bulls by the horns when tobacco and cotton were in the making and so gave you the right to skoot up and down the States in perennial unrest.

In characters to do the main acting, Fielding Burke has happily chosen those people who are just what folks want to be. Isham, whom she resurrected from her first book, "Call Home the Heart," is a mountain girl of earliest American stock, who, having safely passed the horrors of the Winbury (Gaston) strike, has settled her personal struggles and has bound herself in the body and heart of her lover-husband, Britt. Around her the story develops, as she fills her dual roles of mother-wife and unregenerate and hapless carrier of the doctrine of the rights of mankind. Her son, Ned, is without doubt the loveliest creation ever to come from the pen of an American writer, and we hope that he will grow to the free manhood into whose rights his mother and father placed him.

But the best portrait of the book, and one which guarantees the artistic ability of the writer by its definite contrast to the freedom of the Hensley (Ishma, Britt, Ned) family, is the group painting of the Bly Emberson household. Bly Emberson is your uncle who made good in the small town, and who forgot to forget human values when he became owner of a first-class hosiery mill. Verna, his wife, is your aunt Emma who has given her life and everything in it to her religion and to her neuroses. Lorene is you, a grown girl who is ready to make her own life and contemptuous of those childish prattlings of a feeble-minded mother, or you are Martin, a grown young man who goes ahead and does the little sinnings and depends on a "line" to get by the family and remain the favorite. But if you are little Evelyn, just becoming a woman and believing sincerely the teachings of her mother, feeling the pull of her father's humanitarianism, and consumed by a blinding passion for her brother and sister, then only God can help you, and he won't unless you get out in the woods with, say, Ned, who can make things be right without you knowing how it came about.

* * *

INTIMATE PICTURES

In America, only McKinley Cantor can paint a community as well as Fielding Burke; but where he paints (remember his sweeping panorama of Gettysburg?) with words for the effect of romantic idealism, Fielding Burke draws the intimate pictures off family living which in the aggregate make up a community of living you-and-I people. And without exception in this one novel at least she has found the direction of single and communal living. In this Piedmont country she has pointed it, or rather she has followed it, first to the mills where the bread of life is actually guaranteed, and then with the surety of absolute living reasoning to the churches where the bread of life should be. She is the first of all American writers to discover the all-importance of his religion to the Southern worker, the Southern owner, and the Southern politician.

* * *

HER SOLUTION

Unhappily, o, quite unhappily, Fielding Burke has chosen the effective but inopperative solution of communism as the panacea for the ills of the church in the Piedmont. She holds that the church is an ill influence, that its doctrine has enslaved a noble peoples, that its demands daily of physical properties are an insupportable burden, that it gives not enough of any of its powers to compensate for that burden. Those facts may be presented in figures, though they are by far more interesting as she presents them dramatically through her characters. But, because the church may not be eradicated in the Piedmont without destroying the greater part of the beauty of the Piedmont because the Piedmont has had for centuries no other spokesman and outlet for its culture; and because the Piedmont is so close to the most magnificent monuments, the Western North Carolina mountains, and the most irresistible force, the Eastern Atlantic Ocean, that God can muster to His defense as a living being; because of these facts, the church should undergo, we think, exactly the same process which industry is approaching daily, communal control and responsibility. The problem is the same, the cure should be the same; Fielding Burke herself has proven the two to have the same importance in the lives of the peoples of the Piedmont. —E. C. S.

N Y Herald Tribune
March 1-32
Lewis Gannet

And in Carolina

Life goes on in the Carolina mountains, too, in Fielding Burke's story, "Call Home the Heart" (Longmans, Green), but it flows deeper. This is the story of a woman who loved the mountains. Fielding Burke, whoever he may be, must have grown up where he could watch cloud-shadows sail across the mountainsides, and with the smell of fresh earth in his nostrils and the sound of a bubbling spring in his ears. He knows, too, what an aching struggle it is to make that shallow soil pay; how roving cows and rooting pigs and forest fires and the eternal weeds threaten every promised crop; and how sickness and death and children drink and eat up the pitiful cash returns.

Singing and Aching

Ishma Waycaster lives on in the reader's heart. She dreamed of her own log cabin—hers and Britt's—up by the Birch Spring on Cloudy Knob; but year after year went by; children came and her shiftless brother-in-law sold the heifer and the cows broke into the soy beans. Ishma, who had fought for life, finally broke away, though it meant leaving Britt behind. She loved Britt; she always loved Britt, as she always loved the mountains; but she needed to escape somehow, anyhow, from the pull of shiftless relatives and more children. The mountain chapters of "Call Home the Heart" have intense life, the more intense because it is life at once singing and aching.

Down in the mill town Fielding Burke's story takes on a less deep-rooted tone. (Perhaps because the mill towns themselves are less deep-rooted.) Ishma took to nursing the mill workers' wives and children, drifted into the workers' struggle, became an organizer for the National Miners' Union. The story becomes the ghastly story of Gastonia, and a few pages read like a sermon preached by a real hillbilly suddenly converted to communism. Ishma finally escapes back to the mountains, where Britt is still waiting for her, and the fields are at last bearing crops.

A fairy tale? Perhaps; the link between mill town and hill country—Ishma plans to let the miners' children camp on the farm—is forced; but Ishma is real. So are the mountains; so is her love for Britt, and Britt's love for her. Beneath all the undercurrents of slavery to the soil and slavery to the mill-owner runs that lilting love of the hills, and that whole-life love of one man and one woman, somehow a part of the permanence of the mountains. "Call Home the Heart" will not be filmed in Hollywood, but it is hard to understand why the judges of the book club thought Vicki Baum's a better book.

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Call Home the Heart, by "Fielding Burke," masculine pen-name for Kentucky's own gifted daughter, Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, is the outstanding Kentucky novel of 1932, if not the greatest work of prose fiction ever produced by a native of this commonwealth. For the last several years Mrs. Dargan has been one of the leading American poets, represented by her strong and vigorous and hauntingly beautiful lyrics in all of the anthologies, and in five or six collections of her own. Then she switched to prose and produced a book that was acclaimed both in England and America for its freshness and strength. That was Highland Annals, published seven years ago.

Call Home the Heart (Longmans, Green and Company), is a very long novel, more than 400 pages, and it was first printed last February. A second edition was required the following month with the third issue appearing in May. Then it was republished by Jonathan Cape in London, and since that time it has been deluged with compliments of the leading critics in both countries.

I want to say just enough about Call Home the Heart to create in you a desire to read it. Mrs. Dargan has been living for some time in the North Carolina mountains, with homes in Asheville and Almond, and she finds her background in the Land of the Sky. The story is of a girl of the hill country, her family, her lovers, her husband, the mill town, the battle of the workers, an epic tale, truly. Although done in prose form many passages are pure poetry, as one might well anticipate from the pen of a perfect poet.

"Before she was seven, Ishma, the youngest child of Marshall and Leviny Waycaster, had joined the class of burden-bearers. By the time she was thirteen there was little rest for her except on Sunday. That day she kept for herself on the hill-tops."

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New Kentucky Books

Lexington Herald

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rate had previously thought pretty well. There are Christian writers scattered all through the early centuries in whom love and hatred of profane learning are about as unstably balanced as they are in Miss Burke; but in the main, in those days, hatred got the upper hand.

Historical parallels are never quite parallel, and the obvious resemblance between contemporary communism and early Christianity, in their relation to world society, can easily be pushed too far. None the less, each of them professes to be a transvaluation of all previous values; in the case of Christianity the majority influence, for centuries, was against profane learning; and what the Church preserved of ancient truth and beauty, though it is pretty nearly all that was preserved at all, is considerably less than what Christianity destroyed. The present tendency of communism is in the same direction, and we are indebted to Miss Burke for furnishing, in the first and second halves of her book, an object lesson in the difference between bourgeois and proletariat art. If communism eventually gets the upper hand, what has hitherto been called literature is likely to be supplanted by something more on the order of the lives of the saints.

Christianity, of course, is not the only reason for the virtual disappearance of creative literature between the fourth and the eleventh centuries; they may both, ultimately, have been effects of the same cause, an unexplained alteration in the direction of the Mediterranean mind. None the less, the setting of human aspirations on the world to come and the constriction of human thought within the limits of dogma were powerful influences contributing to the repression of whatever literature the men of the Dark Ages might have been capable of producing. Eventually Christianity was humanized, as was Mohammedanism which began so fanatically; as communism no doubt will be when it passes out of the missionary phase. But it is not altogether pleasant to reflect that we may have a few centuries more of Dark Ages ahead of us, and that many of the enthusiasts who recently were busy freeing American literature from the last of the shackles imposed long ago by the Church are now so busy trying to replace the ineffectual tyranny lately thrown off by a new tyranny, which would be more jealously vigilant and more inflexibly dogmatic for generations to come.

I do not think that is going to happen, in this country; but it is to that event that communist literature looks. Individual communists can be artists, as Miss Burke proves in the first half of her book; but under present conditions they will be good artists—as artists have been defined for the past three thousand years—only to such extent as they are bad communists. American literature, whether creative or critical, is not likely to profit much by the contribution of dogmatics whose standards of truth and beauty are as different from ours as were the standards of Orosius from those of Thucydides.

Atlanta, Ga.
Constitution
APR 17 1932

A NEW BOOK.

Call Home the Heart. By Fielding Burke. Jacket design by Frank McIntosh. The readers of the author's contributions to literature have been eagerly waiting for his latest story. So it is with pleasure that we give a little announcement of an interesting review in which the story is told of how the author found his heroine up in the North Carolina mountans. Of course this is a romance with its setting at Goat Ridge where Ishmalee, called Ishma, could only think of the four years of living and loving Britt—they had been hard years but now her face had been turned to something beyond the hills.

Ishma finally found herself one of the workers in a mill town, and while she was using all the energy at her command to battle with the present conditions, she could still hear the call of the mountains—the mountains that never move like the sea, and yet have a message of their own.

The title of "Call Home the Heart" is most appropriate as the story tells of the conflict in the life of a mountain woman of North Carolina. It is called "the noblest novel by an American" this year. There are more than 400 pages and yet the reader will not spend a dull moment for it tells the story of the courage of living. (Longman, Green & Co., New York.)

World Telegram
New York N Y

DEC 3 - 1935

The First Reader



By

HARRY HANSEN

Fielding Burke's Prose in "A Stone Came Rolling" Gives Textile Work Novel a Penetrating Mission.

FIELDING BURKE is a courageous novelist. With economic views that call for the complete reshaping of the economic order she dares write a novel about textile workers of the Carolinas and let her words sing. Until now there seems to have been an agreement among radicals that all stories about workers must be drab and dull so drab that it is often a relief to leave them.

Fielding Burke is definitely out of step. I don't know what will happen to her when the heavy-handed naturalists read "A Stone Came Rolling." Read her right out of the camp, I guess. They berated her for "Call Home the Heart," suggesting that she still had much to learn about the Moscow gospel. That was practically the best labor novel of her year, but she got small credit.

She will get less for "A Stone Came Rolling." Imagine a novelist who intends to describe the starvation level of the tobacco workers of the Piedmont, the hard battle of labor leaders to unite the blacks with the whites, the attempts of mill hands to wrest a living wage from the owners of hosiery plants, starting her yarn with this bit of Valenciennes:—

"Fairinda lightly kissed the air, touching her lips to April. Not so foolish a gesture for the time and place. That part of the Middle South whose sun-rampart is the high Smokies and whose eastern edge is furbelowed by the Atlantic was slipping out of its early twitter into full song. Midway between the scalloped sea edge and the blue band of mountains . . ."

Furbelowed by the Atlantic. Scalloped sea edge. Ugh, the lady's touched. She's gone romantic on the class struggle.

* * *

Religion and the Class Struggle.

BUT it happens that Fielding Burke, who made a name for herself in poetry as Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, is not a flivver tourist to the Piedmont on a seven-day jaunt but a dirt farmer who knows the people roundabout and looks upon the organizers in New York City with compassion for their ignorance. Their worst mistake, says she, was to spread the Moscow doctrine that religion is the opiate of the people; their next, the inability to see that leadership must be local and grow out of the communities where the workers live.

The understanding of what religion means to the whites and the blacks runs all through this book. Fielding Burke does not deny that the church, emphasizing the spiritual welfare, does little or nothing about the material. She has Ishma Britt tell Father Litmore, the Episcopalian cleric who has sympathy for the defeated and the poor, that "men can't be united in love while they are taking one another's jobs." The cleric may insist that "the gate to unity is worship," but Ishma wants to go beyond that.

"We can't unite people with an economic ideal that will really hold unless it is based on the larger foundation of brotherhood and love," says Father Litmore.

"Oh, let us try it out!" pleads Ishma. "Your way has been tried for so long, Father. When you preach brotherhood from the pulpit men grow quiet, patient, unfruitful. But when you walk with them and help them organize for struggle together they grow in unity."

* * *

Continues "Call Home the Heart."

IN "Call Home the Heart" Ishma Waycaster was the girl of the hill people who married Britt, the farmer, and who followed Rad Bailey into the valley to organize the mill hands. In "A Stone Came Rolling" she is back with Britt—and this is their love story. The name of Rad is hurled insultingly at her as she stands on a platform imploring the men to unite, and other insults follow from her enemies. It is then that Britt strikes for her and is shot down in the brawl, and her love story ends.

No doubt there will be readers who resent the impassioned pitch of this novel, who want the labor struggle flung at us in plain words that shall make the men's plight clear to all. The answer is that Fielding Burke is appealing not to the reasoning mind but to the heart.

Yet in spite of the high-flown beauty of her sentences and the halo that she draws around the head of Ishma, she often paints a realistic scene.

* * *

Subtle, Penetrating Mission.

"A STONE CAME ROLLING" is written in lovely, glowing prose that has an air of unreality. But this quality alone gives it a subtle and more penetrating mission. It reveals something growing in the heart of a compassionate woman—love for humanity flowering beside her love for a man. Perhaps the novelist should have made the death of Britt the signal for Ishma's dramatic espousal of leadership. But the way of the author was to let the light into the opening doors of her cell and leave the rest to our imagination. Only a poet could have made this the end.

"A Stone Came Rolling," by Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green. $2.50.

Please go—
Harry

dogmatic religion, frantically trying to twist the evidence to fit the sacred doctrines.

Or, if you want an example nearer home, look at Mr. Dreiser's "Tragic America." How sound Dreiser's communism may be, in the eye of the orthodox, I do not know; but it has evidently bitten deeply enough into him to rid him of the taint of bourgeois virtues. He used to be a good newspaperman, yet "Tragic America" is full of misstatements; in his novels he has analyzed character and motivated behavior as well as any man now writing, but his treatment of the character and motives of real people in "Tragic America" is often simply childish. Dreiser the artist knew a great deal about human beings; Dreiser the convert and missionary casts away the filthy rags of profane knowledge, and glories in the all-sufficient garment of faith.

This sort of thing is no doubt effective polemic, on the tabloid level; but people on the tabloid level are not going to take the considerable trouble involved in reading anything by Dreiser. There is plenty of valid evidence available for the indictment of a political and economic order which is not being very vociferously defended, at present, by anybody but Ralph Easley and Dolly Gann; and if Dreiser had confined himself to that evidence his argument would have more effect on the sort of people who would read a Dreiser book. But the appeal from reason to the passions seems, to the bourgeois critic, a pretty constant characteristic of Communist propaganda. The Communist denies that, of course. There is no truth, no beauty, but "proletarian" truth and beauty; *dæmonum cibus est sæcularis sapientia*. If Communism gets the upper hand, all that has been thought and written in the past will be judged by new standards, and most of it condemned, as the church fathers judged the profane letters of Greece and Rome.

There is not much prospect of that misfortune overtaking America. But the Red infiltration into present-day literature is a nuisance because it imports alien and irrelevant values. It is like a conversation in two languages between people who do not understand each other. The Communist standard of truth and beauty is incommensurable with all other standards, past and present. It is a confusion of two things that do not mix; Communist art and Communist criticism are not what we call art and criticism at all. And a reader who is not persuaded that the past left eye somehow escaped the same fate.

You will have to go a long way to find a more flagrant example of the disastrous consequences of a headlong collision between faith and art. The tolerant liberal will say, of course, that an author has a right to use her work as propaganda for her point of view. True enough; but the bourgeois ideology requires an author who does that to justify her faith by her works. A work of art aims at producing what may be called an illusion, in default of a better word; if the propaganda (or anything else) shatters that illusion, the novel has been spoiled by bourgeois standards of taste and the propaganda—also by bourgeois standards—becomes unconvincing.

So long as Miss Burke keeps her argument within the framework of the illusion and permits her doctrine to be inferred from what happens to the people in her story, the propaganda is powerfully effective. She knows her Carolina mill hands, and it may be presumed that she reports correctly what she has seen in a Carolina mill town. By mere presentation of what that means in its effect on the lives of human beings, she makes you feel that any social order which permits this sort of thing is self-condemned, that nothing could be worse.

If an artist who happened to believe in communism as the saving gospel had wanted to write propaganda for the faith that would be effective on the unconverted, she would have done this and no more. But nothing will satisfy her but drenching her later chapters in the sincere milk of the Word, and the unsaved will find that milk pretty sour. On those who are already true believers the last half of the book may have the stimulant effect of a revival meeting; but the people she is presumably trying to convert are not likely to be moved to any emotion more lofty than derision. Every claim made for communism of the ideal future is accepted as a present fact; any counterweight of practical difficulty in fulfilment of the program is serenely ignored. Even in arithmetic the bourgeois ideology is cast away and the hundred and fifty million Russians become, by proletarian computation, one sixth of the world's population.

As an artist Miss Burke is highly sensitive to pain and cruelty; as a communist she knows that the only thing to do with people who disagree with her about the most effective method of improving the lot of the human race is to shoot them. Before the class struggle runs away with

the story all the characters are realized with justice and insight; but the mill owner's wife is a figure from a comic strip and the professor who is set up as the intellectual champion of capitalism is a venal hireling aware of his own baseness and deliberately shutting his eyes to the true light. Moreover, Miss Burke is careful to give him only such arguments as could be knocked over by any bright pupil in a communist kindergarten. And, true to the faith, she reserves her bitterest scorn for the socialists. The mill owner and his daughter, if not his wife, are permitted some trace of human decency; but there is no redeeming merit at all in the characters who happen to be Marxians of a schismatic sect.

This is not only bad art from a good artist, but ineffective propaganda from a writer who has shown that she can produce good propaganda. It can be rationally explained only on the theory that when the hallelujah urge gets hold of her Miss Burke forgets everything but the ecstasies of the sawdust trail. It is argument by assertion such as can be heard every Sunday from Fundamentalist pulpits, and it springs from the same state of mind; it would be unimportant if it were not the work of the remarkable woman who wrote the first two hundred pages of "Call Home the Heart."

Christian mobs, in the fourth century, sometimes destroyed priceless statues because they happened to be images of pagan gods. There were no sculptors in the fourth century, Christian or pagan, capable of turning out priceless statues; but I do not doubt that here and there some sculptor, upon conversion, may have mutilated a work of which he himself at any

achievement of the human mind is one unrelieved mass of error finds himself increasingly annoyed by the intrusion into reviews and into creative writing of something that has, by our standards, nothing to do with the case.

Communist critics are only living up to their own creed when they review novels (as a good many of them have been reviewing novels lately) by this simple criterion: If it is not about the class struggle, or if it deals with personalities instead of masses, then it is not a good novel. *Omnis sapientia hominis in hoc uno est.* Some of these gentlemen show evidence of having had plenty of profane knowledge, and even taste, before their conversion; but they dutifully discard it now and measure everything by the foot rule of this new dispensation. This, perhaps, does not greatly matter, though I am old-fashioned enough to believe that the reader of a book review has a right to know something about the book, rather than about the theological opinions of the reviewer. But it is rather more serious when the frenzy of the devotee leads to the mutilation of a work of art, by the artist herself.

The recent "Call Home the Heart," for instance, is, for the first half of its considerable length, one of the finest of American novels. It has pity, passion, elevation, a long list of characters clearly and plausibly realized; as you read it you are carried along on the current, completely surrendered to the illusion—and when you suddenly find yourself absorbing a communist missionary sermon that lasts for eight solid pages you feel as if the second act of "Tristan" has been embellished with a long interpolation by a Salvation Army band. Thereafter the missionary sermons overshadow the story to such an extent that you are doubtful, for a while, whether this is communist propaganda or a not very skilful parody of communist propaganda. But it seems to be intended seriously; and it goes on and on till the very end, when the author, apparently not without shame for her weakness, permits herself a relapse into art. Her mountain heroine, descending into the plains and embracing the new faith, finally goes back to the mountains; her faith is firm, but she is too weak to labor in the vineyard; she can preach communism, but her blood revolts against physical contact with a negress (and its corollaries in communist doctrine). But despite this revulsion she seems able to swallow preachments that have wearied the reader long before.

The lady who calls herself Fielding Burke is an enthusiastic convert to the faith, but she cannot help looking backward occasionally toward the City of Destruction. She believes in the infallible Marxian Scriptures, and her criticism of truth is as strictly dogmatic as the most rigid of the faithful could ask; but when it comes to beauty she has some deplorable falls from grace. For she is an artist and she has not been able to rid herself altogether of an unregenerate weakness for bourgeois standards of beauty and proportion—even for bourgeois virtues. The chapters dealing with a Carolina mill town bring an authentic proletariat into the story; and Miss Burke commits the pretty nearly unpardonable offense of treating them as individual human beings and not as a mass. But her spirit is willing enough even if the flesh is sometimes feeble; she is ready to pluck out her right

eye if it offends her, and the bourgeois reader can only be grateful that the

unless a wholly improbable change occurs in the mentality of the American people, that order will be quite as alien to orthodox communism. Our communist intellectuals virtually admit that when they write cheerfully of the rivers of blood (other people's blood) that must flow before the apostles of the enlightenment succeed in giving the American proletariat what is good for them.

There begin to be signs, however, that American literature is going to have its Red peril, even though it is no more than a Red nuisance as yet. Germs that a healthy organism can throw off find a foothold in an enfeebled system, and while no part of American society looks any too vigorous at present, the intellectual group is about the sickest of the lot. In the nineteen twenties the intellectuals set up a great hullabaloo, most of which boiled down to the question, What is it all about? No satisfactory answer was found; and few intellectuals had sufficient sense of proportion or knowledge of history to realize that this misfortune was neither unprecedented nor necessarily fatal; to perceive that nobody has ever yet found a finally satisfactory answer but that somehow the human race has managed to worry along.

To admit that there are questions which even our so impressive intelligence is un-

able to answer, and at the same time not

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TEN CENTS A COPY

view

The Cosmopolitan Club
185 East 40th St., N. Y.

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NUMBER 39

The Red Peril

By ELMER DAVIS

EVEN in these distressful times, it needs a lively imagination to see any serious danger (or hope, if you prefer) that America will go communist. What you read, and still more what you hear, among the intellectuals might lead you to think that the glorious day was at hand when, the awful summons hearing, the capitalist heaven and earth will pass away. But most of these ladies and gentlemen appear to have a somewhat vague notion of what communism is, in theory or practice, or why the ills we know not of are preferable to those we have. In fact, they would probably be among the first to be shot; when they saw communism in operation, in its early stages of gaining and consolidating power, they would be shocked; and being still under the influence of bourgeois ideology, they might give unguarded expression to their feelings before they realized that they were living in a new order which did not tolerate criticism.

However, they are not likely to be exposed to such a painful contrast between expectation and reality. The profit system as our ancestors knew it is apparently on the way out; the American economic order of the future, perhaps even the near future, will probably be something that would be unrecognizable to Alexander Hamilton or Commodore Vanderbilt. But

with the lately revealed truth; and except in pure technology they are unfitted to grasp it exactly in so far as they are good communists. It is as true now as it ever was that submission to religious dogma is poisonous to any attempt at dispassionate thinking, or to intellectual appraisal of the ideas of other men.

For proof of that you need go no farther than the analyses of international politics currently appearing in the editorials of *Izvestiya* and *Pravda*. The French General Staff and the American Farm Board are allies in a foul conspiracy for an unprovoked assault on proletarian Russia; if no such assault takes place, it is presumably because vigilant Moscow editors have exposed the plot in time. The Japanese adventure at Shanghai is only the first step in a joint attack on China by the imperialistic capitalist powers, to be followed by the apocalyptically predicted crusade against the Soviet Union. Yet at the same time, almost in the same issue, the Japanese adventure in Shanghai is proof that the greed of the predatory capitalist powers is about to lead them into wars (also prophetically predicted) against one another. The bourgeois reader is likely to wonder if the men who concoct these theories are conscious liars or merely lunatics. They are neither, of course—only devotees of a

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Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 1932 NUMBER 39

The Cosmopolitan Club
155 East 40th St., N. Y.

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Loose Item(s)

able to answer, and at the same time not to despair of the ability of the human race to find, eventually, better answers than we can reach as yet—to recognize that there is nothing to do but keep on trying as well as we can, and to be as content as we can with the small gains that in the course of ages amount to something—that requires some courage and some balance; qualities which were not notably prevalent among the intellectuals of the 'twenties. Accordingly a good many of them have taken the easiest way out and yielded to the attraction of a system in which final and all-embracing truth is laid down in the sacred writings, to be authoritatively interpreted for the faithful by the communist church.

The merit of communism as an economic system is a technical question, requiring considerably more evidence than we now have before anybody can be sure of the answer. But so far as can be judged from their writings it is not communism as economics that has taken hold of the imaginations of its American intellectual converts; it is communism as a medicine for sick souls. Why not Catholicism, whose value as an anodyne has been proved by long experience? Well, for one thing (as I have argued in these pages before) because Catholicism is actually in operation in this country; a man who professed his conversion to Catholicism would be expected to behave as a Catholic and refrain from practising the seven deadly sins and from writing novels about some of them. (Not all Catholic novelists so restrict themselves, but those who do not are apt to find themselves involved in arguments with their stricter coreligionists.) But a man who professes communism may continue, pending the dawn of the red millennium over these states, to enjoy all the advantages of capitalist democracy, not the least of which, for the intellectual, is the rare felicity of being permitted to think what you like and say what you think in print.

That is not all of it, of course. The man or woman whose intellectual background is immediately rationalist and more remotely Protestant has a subcutaneous emotional antipathy to Catholicism; he is used to thinking of Catholicism as faith, whereas communism is ostensibly a triumph of rationalism. That reason and faith are blended in about the same proportion in each does not disturb him; he takes them both at their face value. And finally a creed which sets the attainment of perfect felicity in the hereafter is less congenial to the contemporary spirit than

one which (however recklessly) envisions the perfectibility of life on earth. People in whom the judgment outweighs the emotions are likely to be skeptical of the attainment of perfect felicity by the human race, at any rate within the next million years; but those are not the people who are looking around for a Rock of Ages.

Most of us are driven to strange shifts in these hard times, and the bourgeois ideologist may doubt his right to condemn people who save their emotional comfort at the expense of their capacity for disinterested thinking. They would deny, of course, that they pay any such price. The art of reconciling faith with reason is an old one, and the communists follow respectable precedent if they accomplish it by subordinating reason to faith and holding, in the end, that what appear as facts to the eye of the unsaved cannot be facts if they contradict revelation. It may be that they are the heirs of the future, but their inheritance cannot include very much of the stored intellectual treasure of the past. They do not want it; it is "bourgeois," that is, it is hard to reconcile with the lately revealed truth; and except in pure technology they are unfitted to grasp it exactly in so far as they are good communists. It is as true now as it ever was that submission to religious dogma is poisonous to any attempt at dispassionate thinking, or to intellectual appraisal of the ideas of other men.

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CHANGE THE WORLD!



By Michael Gold

They Done Her Wrong

JEANETTE PEARL of Long Island feels that somebody has misled her badly. The novel, "Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke, was reviewed very favorably in the **New Masses** sometime in 1932. Comrade Jeanette recommended the novel, therefore, to her friends.

But only last week, she writes, did she read the book herself. It made her feel "as if I could tear it into a thousand fragments to be hurled out of the window."

This is the novel written around the strike of the textile workers in Gastonia, N. C., some few years back. The author is Olive Tilford Dargan, a native of that state, who used the pen-name of "Fielding Burke," but now has put her own name on later editions.

This too seems to infuriate Comrade Pearl. "That my reaction is not baseless," she says, "is borne out by the fact that the author, Dargan, is now permitting her real name to appear on the third edition. The book is so safe, its increasing circulation so assuring to the prestige and security of the author, that her literary name need no longer be withheld from the public. She has made good with her publishers and the book's virtue is so effectively polluting the stream of labor literature that the author can openly flaunt her name."

* * *

Comrade Pearl is amazed that such a book "should have been heralded in the columns of the New Masses." The book is artistically written, but that is all the more reason to fear its effect, she says. It was V. J. Jerome who wrote the review that offends her so much, and since he is a well-known Marxist theorist, maybe this is a further multiplication of the damage done.

* * *

What Got the Pearl Goat

IT IS the ending of the novel that has stirred up Comrade Pearl's usually placid goat. In the novel, a mountain woman is pictured with great skill and beauty as the heroine. She is lured with many promises by the mill owners, as were so many thousands like her, and comes to work in the mills. The strike takes place, and she is a a heroic participant. At the end, however, she decides to go back to the mountains.

This, of course, is the weakest of evasions of a solution for the problems of the Southern worker. Supposing they all did go back to their ancestral hill farms? The farmers who never left are just as hungry as their brothers in the mill towns, and going back is like hopping from the frying pan into the fire.

It is this mystic defeatism, this feeling that the workers can never win their battle, and that it is better to save oneself by any means, that so often destroys the author who honestly attempts to write labor fiction.

* * *

ANYBODY can write the first two acts of a revolutionary play. It is the last act, the act that resolves the conflicts, that has baffled almost every revolutionary playwright and novelist in this country.

For you can't truthfully say in your last act or last chapter, that there has been a victorious Communist revolution in this country. It would be a lie if you did, yet many of our comrades like Jeanette Pearl almost demand that an author falsify in this manner.

* * * *

THE Gastonia strike was not lost of course; it was really a great victory. It was the first great resounding signal of the class struggle in the South; the Bunker Hill of the social revolution down there.

Bunker Hill looked like a defeat for the Americans, too; but the Revolution of 1776 was won, anyway. In this sense, Olive Tilford Dargan might have, if she had had the historic Marxian outlook, given a victorious ending to her fine novel.

But she succumbed to that "creeping empiricism" which cannot rise above the immediate fact, or co-ordinate the facts into a historic picture that includes the past and future.

This was her fault, I believe; and not that she sent her mountain woman back to the hills, and showed the strike as ending in a defeat. We will have to record many such partial defeats and tragedies in the labor movement before the war is won. And authors, for a long time, will find it difficult to rise above empiricism, and revolutionary readers like Comrade Jeanette, will shriek hysterically (that is, some of them) of betrayal.

* * *

A Defense of Communism

IT IS really unworthy of you, Comrade, to be so blind to the revolutionary import of this fine and powerful novel.

It was written by a Southern woman whose eyes were first opened to the class struggle by this same Gastonia strike. She threw herself into it heart and soul on the side of the strikers; and in her novel, you will read as fine a statement and defense of the Communists in the South as has ever been written in any play or novel.

Olive Tilford Dargan didn't know how to end her novel. Most of our revolutionary authors still find this the toughest of problems. We don't want to be defeatist; yet we don't want to falsify and do a lot of artificial hurrahing.

It's true only a thorough grounding in Marxism can help authors attain the mature viewpoint that will solve this difficulty.

But they won't be helped by critics like Jeanette Pearl who don't even understand what the problem is all about; who have no real sympathy for the fresh minds who are drawn to Communism.

* * *

OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN will write other novels, and they will probably show her own attempts to find a solution. If our critics can't help, they ought not condemn. The problem of writing revolutionary fiction is something so complicated, tangled as it is with all the psychological and social threads of a mind, that it takes something other than a dull meat-axe like Comrade Pearl's attack to make this delicate apparatus function.

It's about time some of us understood that the Diesel engine and the revolutionary novel have their own special problems to be studied. Our literature is growing, but it grows despite years of such blind destructive anti-Marxian attacks as this typical one of Comrade Pearl's.

I Love before that, Mike—
O.Z.

fore the American public. Her new book, published today is a continuation of the story that she began to tell in her first novel, "Call Home the Heart." She offers a detailed report of conflict in a Carolina mill town: of strikes and labor disputes with their incidents of violence and bloodshed; of men and women forced to accept wages that are below subsistence level; of power used ruthlessly against the helpless. Fielding Burke leaves no doubt as to her own position. It is from the point of view of the mill workers that she writes of economic inequalities and of the sufferings that they cause.

* * *

Her Characters Have Genuine Personal Power.

THE CONSCIENTIOUS CRITIC is under orders from his conscience to write of every book that comes before him simply as an artistic entity and to say of it whether or not it fulfills its own intention. It must be extremely pleasant for the members of the "perfect rot" school of comment that they feel no obligation to discriminate shadings of merit in a kind of work that does not gratify its own prejudices. But it happens that proletarian novels, like novels of any other sort, fall into the familiar groupings of good, bad and indifferent. I cannot be impressed by the proletarian novel of Edward Dahlberg because it seems to be the product of a meager spirit, of a man with irritating personal grievances which he wishes to magnify into the proportions of a cause. Dissimilarly, the spirit of Fielding Burke is vigorous, honest, unmarked by any petty impulse to get even.

What one finds admirable in her work is the rich detail with which she builds up her story of struggle. Here is no battle of shadows with each vague army flying banners embroidered with familiar slogans. Her characters in each group are men and women of deep-rooted instincts and genuine personal power. The clash of such lively and believable creatures cannot help but have a solid impact.

In the foreground stands Ishma, a kind of Joan of Arc among the mill-workers. She plays in this book a role similar to that which she played in "Call Home the Heart." She is a woman whose simple, natural impulses control every action. She is not concerned with theories but with the need to provide food for men and women. It is part of the wisdom of Fielding Burke's presentation of her character that one sees Ishma making mistakes of tactics. The one way in which she is never mistaken is in the decency and vigor of her impulse.

* * *

Completely Honest Effort Made to Depict Problem.

THERE ARE MANY threads in the rich design. There is the story of the conscientious manufacturer who collapses under the insufferable burden of his effort to meet the conditions of the depres-

sion without sacrificing the workers. There is the self-made man fighting ruthlessly for his position. There are the timorous public officials who permit themselves to be used instead of guiding the course of the conflict. There are the honest men in both camps and the unscrupulous self-seekers in both camps. Seldom has every element in a struggle of this kind been represented with a more completely honest effort to show what actually happens when men reach an impasse in their disputes.

Fielding Burke is not innocent of any fault. There are turgid passages, passages in which she permits the author to take center stage and expound. It is curious that she should ever have felt under that necessity since she has so many admirably concerned characters into whose mouths she could put any sentiment that she wished to express. But these are only occasional lapses. For the most part she has stated the problem in terms of drama, showing the reader in a score of powerful scenes the actual meeting of two bitterly opposed ways of thought. It is an accomplishment that commands one's admiration.

Since the solution of differences of this kind has not yet been found by the many able minds that have been deeply concerned with them over a long period, Fielding Burke cannot claim to have offered one. The book ends with the issues undecided. The importance of "A Stone Came Rolling" is that it fixes attention upon the most exciting drama that the American scene offers today.

KELSO, WASH.
TRIBUNE

DEC 4 1935

Outstanding for her ability to combine artistic expression with ideals of the class struggle, Fielding Burke is one of the most pleasing and persuasive writers of the ever-growing group of proletarian novelists.

Her "Call Home the Heart" was greeted by critics of all connections as a significant and impressive sign that a new author of distinction had appeared on the American literary scene. Her new novel, "A Stone Came Rolling" (Longmans Green), adds to her stature as a writer for it is evidence that Olive Dargan (for that is her real name) is not a one-book author and that the success of her first effort has not swerved her from devotion to social reform.

"A Stone Came Rolling" concerns the same people with whom the reader became acquainted in Miss Dargan's first book—Ishma and Britt, Bly Emberson and his wife Verna. The background is the southern mill town of Dunmow and the theme, the conflict between mill workers and mill owners to come between herself and her most effective and compelling material—the social unrest that culminates in strikes and death. Her men and women seem shadowy figures playing unreal parts when concerned with personal relationships of no social significance. But when they appear as elements in the stirring labor struggle, then they take on color and dimension and vitality. This characteristic is due, of course, to the fact that Miss Dargan writes with genuine feeling and sincerity when she is dealing with the movement which moves her most strongly. That is one salient mark of the proletarian novelists—they are more concerned with life and growth of the cause than of the individual human being.

This is understandable, of course and largely true of every political activity since the beginning of time. But as far as literature is concerned, it will not be until the proletarian novelists integrate the expression of their ideals with first rate character creation that they will reach and convert the mass of readers.

Taking "A Stone Came Rolling" at its face value as a novel pure and simple, it is less than remarkable, but taking it as an expression of faith and translation into fiction of a great human movement it becomes important. And allied with this importance is a moving and eloquent effort to end suffering and create a new world. For these reasons, read "A Stone Came Rolling."

N.Y. Times Book Review Dec. 15th 1935

Two Novels About Industrial Unrest

A STONE CAME ROLLING. By Fielding Burke. 412 *pp. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.* $2.50.

A SIGN FOR CAIN. By Grace Lumpkin. 376 *pp. New York: Lee Furman, Inc.* $2.50.

HERE are two novels dealing directly with industrial unrest in the South, both by writers who have put their trust in Communist doctrine. As creative literature, neither is likely to survive beyond its season, although in the case of Fielding Burke we have to do with a writer of distinguished gifts. She is not, however, primarily a novelist, but a poet passionately moved by her sense of social justice. Miss Lumpkin has, I think, more sense of character, but her work, besides being undistinguished in form, lacks those flashes of illumination of which Fielding Burke is capable.

"A Stone Came Rolling" continues the story begun by Miss Burke in "Call Home the Heart," though it is not in the strict sense of the word a sequel. Ishma, the mountain woman whom Miss Burke has conceived in heroic terms, and her husband, Britt Hensley, are again the central figures in her drama, though they are pictured now against a fuller background, in relation to a larger group of people. Miss Burke has essayed a comprehensive view of life in the mill town which she calls Dunmow, and she succeeds in making you feel the currents of change which are sweeping through it. One cannot read her book without admiring its warm and generous feeling, without knowing that an idealist speaks in its pages. There is no hatred of capitalists in her conviction that the capitalist system must end: simply an overwhelming sympathy for those whom the system crushes and a crusading faith that there is but one means by which their lives can be made better. Even a reader who disagrees with her economic assumptions can see that and respect it.



Fielding Burke.

For the book's merits as a novel not so much can be said. One cannot escape a sense of unreality in the figure of Ishma, who is the core of the book; she is merely the vehicle for Miss Burke's idealism, and even the words she speaks at times give the lie to her actuality. Nor does one really know Britt, beyond the facts that he is big and strong, courageous and sincerely religious. All the book's action seems superimposed on the characters. There are pages of quite lovely writing, some of it penetrating and wise, but the novel has no form, it is oppressively didactic, and always one is conscious of Miss Burke, speaking out of compassion for the people of whom she writes.

"A Sign for Cain" is a novel that, once read, fades very rapidly in the mind. One retains from it a sense of its honesty, of its fervent conviction, as one does from "A Stone Came Rolling," but the story and the people, in their relations to one another, blur. Its central theme is the need for union, on the basis of common interests, of the Negroes and the poor whites. Miss Lumpkin, like Miss Burke, does not allow her convictions to destroy her sense of justice in dealing with people whose social function she abhors; she does not create monsters out of hate. All her people are credible, even if they are in no sense of the word memorable.

J. DONALD ADAMS.

Saint Paul Minnesota

MILL TOWN WOES POWERFULLY TOLD BY FIELDING BURKE

"A Stone Came Rolling" Depicts Industrial Struggle of Characters of Deep-Noted Instincts and Genuine Personal Power.

By James Gray.

"A Stone Came Rolling" by Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green.

WHEN G. B. STERN visited the Twin Cities recently she was drawn into a discussion of the "proletarian novel" of which she boasted that she had never heard. She was glad to hear of it, however, so that she could go about telling people that it was "perfect rot."

The visiting English celebrity feels always under the obligation to be blunt and decisive. The habit helps to make interviews readable and lectures effective. That, however, does not keep it from being a very bad habit indeed. Miss Stern evidently assumed that the proletarian novel was something artificially contrived or spuriously decorated like poetry printed backward or without punctuation.

What Miss Stern failed to understand, as she made her splendid gesture of dismissal, is that the proletarian novel is simply the thesis novel in a new guise. It has its old and honorable tradition. If you begin to dismiss the writers who have used fiction and the theater to deliver judgments on society, you will find yourself in the embarrassing position of saying that Tolstoi, Ibsen and Zola wrote perfect rot.

In discussing the privileges and duties of the novelist, Miss Stern grouped herself with the old school in England, with H. G. Wells, for example. But good heavens! what has Wells ever written but the thesis novel! It does not do to be too careless in meting out damnation. One's nearest and dearest may be found to be on the wrong side.

* * *

Mill Workers' Viewpoint Presented in Volume.

SOME ENTERPRISING lecture bureau in New York should arrange, before G. B. Stern leaves America in a cloud of epithets, for a lecture between her and another woman writer who believes in the proletarian novel. Fielding Burke is the pseudonym of one of the ablest novelists now be-

N.Y. Sun

The Book of the Day

Feb. 18th 1932

by Laurence Stallings

A Book About Mountains and Looms—And a Story to Move the Heart.

Miss Elizabeth Maddox Roberts is not only a fine novelist, but she may be said to have reformed a whole mass of sectional literature by her work in the speech and the manners of the Appalachian people. These are mainly Scotch Covenanters, curiously speaking Elizabethan words and still singing the border ballads about their fires; many with the naïve childishness of savage remoteness, and all with natural air—a love of the forces of nature rather than of the pastorals of Rousseau or Wordsworth—and with a gift of imagery in speech not excelled by any other body of English speaking people.

That Miss Roberts embittered the field which was years sweetened by such sentimentalists as Thomas Nelson Page and John Fox Jr. is not true. She seems to have come from nowhere save from the body of the great poetic traditions of language. She avoided in "The Great Meadow" all the professional faults of the dialect writers, and with the curious, ragged rhetoric of her characters achieved as fine a distinction in writing as the American novel may boast.

Until some other novelist may prove the contrary, it seems that the field of American writing will not lend itself to rhetoric in its true sense, save in those remote and insular valleys where rhetoric is still given lip-service by those who have suffered no infiltrations and infusions from modernity. The finest testimony, we think, of Miss Roberts's work—other than its own effect upon the eye and ear of the reader—is in the new group of novels somehow sprung up in the same mountain pastures. The newest of these is by Fielding Burke. It is called "Call Home the Heart" (Longmans Green; $2.50).

* * *

Mr. Burke's people are native to any pastoral novel; that is to say, we have the virtuous girl of the mountains and the headstrong boy she loves with hopeless devotion. The book does not swerve from the old immortal pattern of such balladry; for there is the strong scene at the end which climaxes a succession of "many moving accidents twixt flood and field," and in the end the long-suffering Griselda is paid off with happiness.

It is the speech of these folk which lends itself, by some paradox of outworn manners, in making "Call Home the Heart" a thing of freshness and sweep, of force and character. The ordinary incidents of its love story, centering about sacrifice and fear, might be tagged for anywhere now in the South where a rural people, wedded to their pasture lands, are confronted with an invasion by industry. This thing goes on. Papers everywhere hardly ceased printing dispatches from Danville, Va., before we are revolted by the brutality of a beating administered Waldo Frank in the mining country of a neighboring State.

It is doubtful if any one gauges the temper of these mountaineers who look down upon all except themselves. We had the pleasure the other night of hearing Mr. Bertram Thomas defining the attitude of the desert Arabs to all other breeds of men; and when he said that these half-childish, savage folk looked down upon all men not of their clan we thought of this curious insularity in relationship to the Appalachians, where once again a folk, withdrawn from life around them, are now being moved by universal forces.

* * *

In "Call Home the Heart" there is a movement from the mountains to the plains, from the pastures to the factories, which is done with deep insight into this new effort on the part of industrial manufacturers to take up a few knots in the Dixie

cultural lag. We, for one, who have watched these clouds gathering from time to time, believe that no strike fields in other sections of the country will have known the bitterness that these will presently develop. We wish to quote a conversation Mr. Burke includes in his novel; it is like many that one may hear, not from mill workers, but from these uplanders:

"They say they've got to cut wages 'cause the market's breaking up. Bert says they're talkin' round now like nothin' but a war's going to put the market back."

"Well, I ain't got no boy to give 'em this time. He's layin' over in France, an' he's layin' mighty still."

"Bert says it ain't goin' to be that kind of a war if they git it. Us workin' folks what do the fightin' 'll make it something else. It'll be a war to make over the Government an' make the big bosses an' ever'body go to work an' not let 'em have more'n what we got for ourselves. Me an' Bert set through the haunch o' the night with little Bert, an' we talked it all over."

"Make ever'body work?"

"Yeah, you'll have to put in steady yerself, Abe."

"We kaint have that kind of a war. We ain't got no army. The Government's got it."

"Who's the army? Ain't it our boys?"

"Yeah, I reckon. But pore folks aint got no choice against the Government. Some of them folks what air behind it air wuth a million dollars."

"Well, I'll tell you something for proof. I got it from Matt Weaver an' he got it straight from Job Weygood. The pore an' the rich are going to fight it out."

"You can allus hear that kind of talk. It's like a he-huckleberry; don't bear nuthin'."

"I reckon if it does come to a showdown us mountain folks 'll go with the pore."

"Shore. We'll go with 'em like the wind a-blowin'. They's our folks."

* * *

"Call Home the Heart" has everything we like to find in a novel of our time. It has sentiment and feeling, and yet is guided by a writer who is following his own day among his own people. It is worth all the books on labor conditions recently turned out about the class wars just beginning among a people in States where, as yet, the legislation even tardily arrived at in New York State—minimum hours, child labor laws and various safety measures—have hardly been broached; and, too, where the small-town press is almostly uniformly servile. (We remember how New York manufacturers, before Gov. Smith some years ago, confessed that the social legislation of the State had advanced their own interests.)

Yet the day we began reading Mr Burke's book we saw a headline in a Virginia paper, a scare head saying that the present attempt to lower the fifty-six-hour week for women in Virginia cotton mills would be ruinous to the industry! It is part of Mr. Burke's sweep that he is not a scare-head, and in nothing is ill balanced or toward. He is not a special pleader, but a recorder. Novels such as his have a truth and a humanity about them, over and above their immediate reading enjoyment; and in the changes and chances of this, our little world, we find two feudist hill billies chewing the straws of Marxist doctrines on the Trail of the Lonesome Pine while beneath them in the cities of the plain trouble is brewing while children are starving.

...d 'In Red,' ...al Purple

...KER BRANDEN.

...ked so bold that not even all a ...king's men could keep the ...rling through the 280 rooms of

...ble tale was Saxony's former ... mansion is the very jewel of ... the hill towns, here are people trying grimly to conquer in the fight for existence on the barren farmlands and in the cotton mills, and yet the whole story deals with one individual's emotional response to such opportunity as her spirit demands.

"Call Home the Heart" is one of the most satisfying love stories I have read in a long time. It tells how Ishma Waycaster, who lived up among the hill people, was able to follow her heart whither it led—first into matrimony with Britt, the farmer; then down into the valleys with Rad Bailey; then into the wider loyalties of human co-operation as the union was organized among the mill hands. And finally, after having her fill of union, Communism and the men who represented new theories of economic life, back to the hilly trail and to Britt once more—a woman of understanding and generosity, and always the strong figure of the book.

And thus, although we get a clear picture of the simple life of the hills, its conventions, drudgery and suffering, and although we see what happens in the mill towns and what rosy promises are held before the hands by the northern organizers, we never lose sight of Ishma, for the story is not about mountaineers and millhands so much as about one woman's heart—a woman who learns as she experiences life in all its forms, and returns home assuaged. Longman Green & Co. publish this worthy novel.

* * *

cultural lag. We, for one, who have watched these clouds gathering from time to time, believe that no strike fields in other sections of the country will have known the bitterness that these will presently develop. We wish to quote a conversation Mr. Burke includes in his novel; it is like many that one may hear, not from mill workers, but from these uplanders:

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North Carolina Life Made Background for Novel

Fielding Burke's New Novel Arrives Without Usual Fanfare and Trumpeting.

By HARRY HANSEN.

FIELDING BURKE has made an extraordinarily successful use of the backgrounds of North Carolina life in his novel, "Call Home the Heart," which has just arrived without the trumpetings of half a dozen critics and well-wishers. Here is the life of the mountains and of the mill towns, here are people trying grimly to conquer in the fight for existence on the barren farmlands and in the cotton mills, and yet the whole story deals with one individual's emotional response to such opportunity as her spirit demands.

"Call Home the Heart" is one of the most satisfying love stories I have read in a long time. It tells how Ishma Waycaster, who lived up among the hill people, was able to follow her heart whither it led—first into matrimony with Britt, the farmer; then down into the valleys with Rad Bailey; then into the wider loyalties of human co-operation as the union was organized among the mill hands. And finally, after having her fill of union, Communism and the men who represented new theories of economic life, back to the hilly trail and to Britt once more—a woman of understanding and generosity, and always the strong figure of the book.

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at Valley of Virginia, a region which has not yet attracted its factories. Miss Burke, a devotee of Carolina, has to deal with a locality where the contradictions between the new and the old are sharper than they are in Virginia. If a reader will take "Vein of Iron" and "A Stone Came Rolling" as complementary, he will be making the first step toward understanding the bewildering complexity of the American scene.

The Emphasized Characters.

If there is a weakness in "A Stone Came Rolling," it inheres in Miss Burke's choice of characters for emphasis. She has concentrated her analysis on Bly Emberson, the liberal employer, and on Ishma Hensley, the militant organizer. These are characters of distinct dramatic worth. Dr. Schermerhorn, the philosophic old-timer, is first-rate as a Greek chorus who understands history and ethics. But Miss Burke should have caused one important character from the group of indecisive workers to shoulder up from the vagueness of his background in order to make the novel completely representative.

John Chamberlain. N.Y. Times

N Y News

NOV 3 - 1935

Surging Humanity

A STONE CAME ROLLING, by Fielding Burke (Longmans, $2.50). 412 pages.

FIELDING BURKE writes "A Stone Came Rolling" as a novel. But it's deeper stuff than crust. With the world and America at the cross-roads, he's sliced the truth from the bread of life. Those who remember his "Call Home the Heart" will find additional thoughts on Socialism in his new book. It's a kind of sequel to his first novel of Ishma and her struggle to lead the workers to light. The same characters live their lives in this changing world.

One need not read his other book to understand this one. The battleax of Time swings at the labor problem—unions, capitalism—chopping to pieces the truth which none of us may avoid. There's the drama of surging humanity in his picture of mill life in the South.

A controversial subject is handled intelligently. If at times Fielding sermonizes, his lengthy expose justifies itself in the end. Brilliantly written, cleverly handled, drama comes to the rescue when interest commences to sag. Such a book may gather moss, even as you and I.—M. J. Fulton.

MARCH 5, 1932 ATURE

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Saturday Revi
not be answered in print, a stamp
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G. D. M., Elmira, N. Y., needs a list of novels about mountain people of the South, "mostly in Kentucky but not all in that district."

THE noblest novel by an American this year is about a mountain woman: "Call Home the Heart," by Fielding Burke (Longmans, Green). Critics commonly cold-blooded are quite likely to become a bit incoherent in finding adjectives for it. Words long under a cloud—that word noble, for one, or even uplifting—and no reviewer really likes to use either of those for a novel, considering the uses to which they have been put. Someone sooner or later is bound to compare it with "The Good Earth," and indeed it is of this type, no more to be hurried than a sunrise, no more to be delayed than the precession of the equinoxes.

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MARCH 5, 1932 S. R. L. THE SA

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. B *Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries not be answered in print, a stamped and addressed ~~envelope~~ reply.

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BOOKS

By H. H. H.

A Stone Came Rolling. By Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green: New York, $2.50.

The only North Carolina writer whose social consciousness has come to any definite action in literature is Fielding Burke (Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan of West Asheville, North Carolina). Her fine and penetrating novel "Call Home the Heart" aroused New York critics and many of them abroad to attention in 1932. This season she has written "A Stone Came Rolling" with the same dramatic intensity, a compelling work of mass action, of humanity moving in the tide of economic conflict. Not only is Fielding Burke leading a rebellion in southern letters, but she is one of the best poets in America.

"A Stone Came Rolling" is the December selection of the book union, a recently organized book club on the order of the Literary Guild, except that it is interested in books on the social scene and offers these books at a more reasonable price. This book is offered ninety cents less than publishers price from the Book Union, addressed at 381 Fourth avenue, New York. Reviewing this book in the Bulletin, Louis Kronenberger says, "'A Stone Came Rolling' contains those qualities we are all most eager to find in a novel, strong characterizations, a spread of canvas, a rush of events. It moves in the midst of life. Dealing with the people first introduced in 'Call Home the Heart,' this book has to do with contemporary issues in a Piedmont mill town where individual problems are inesparable from those of the community.

The setting of this dramatic and penetrating novel is Dunmow with its furniture factories, its many religious sects, its compact democratic spirit, textile and hosiery mills, tobacco factories. It is a moving city of industry and life. Dunmow is no particular Piedmont city—it seems to be a composite of Durham, High Point and Winston-Salem. In combining these three industrial centers of the state, Miss Burke has created a setting of combined industrial conflict, a mass action that moves directly through the heart of contemporary America. Dunmow is a settlement older than the American revolution, yet its leaders are old and unmoved in their thinking. They no longer respect the revolutionary spirit of Thomas Jefferson, though they mention his name at meetings.

The characters in this novel are neither types nor symbols—there are workers, organizers, textile and tobacco workers, mill owners, bankers and farmers, but they are human beings. There is Bly Emberson the owner of a textitle and hosiery mill in Dunmow. He wanted to do everything he could to make his workers happy. He was interested in their welfare, since Isham, the girl who had come from the mountains of Carolna (a character in her earlier novel) had explained some of the workers' conditions to him. Emberson was one of the few employers who was able to understand the severity of the times.

But Emberson was beaten at home. His wife hounded him and gave him no peace. Verna, the wife, not only wrecked his life and made a moral coward of him, but was ruining her children. She wanted to tell Lorene whom to marry, but Lorene had her way and did as she pleased. Verna wrecked the life of Evelyn, a child caught in a compactness of religious belief. As Derry said, her belief was so strong that she could have been a Joan of Arc. There is their son, Martin who finally awakens to a new day when his father takes the easiest way out of the struggle. Bly keeps the wages of his workers up when a wage cut is in order—and he cancels their debts!

Ishma tells him that it was not even a fine gesture. All the mill owners will have to do it before it will do them any good. This will only ruin Bly, and it finally does. Some of the penetrating characters in this book are Isham and Britt, the fair child of the Piedmont Fairinda whose father has just lost his farm and house to the bankers, Judge Anniston who has never heard of the Mooney case, of old Doctor Schermerhorn who explained to Bly that the 'status quo' which the capitalist asked to be protected was their own. There are organizers, workers and leaders who are alive to the situation. "A Stone Came Rolling" is a novel that is compelling and significant, very much alive to the economic pressure of the day.

Herald-Sun
Durham
N. C.

to impart and the privilege of imparting them . . . Lawyers will turn their brilliance toward the removal of obstructive debris, not expend it on devising shackles to hold decay together . . . Instead of one Keats in a thousand years, distilling his life-blood into poetry, we shall have a thousand of his like in one year feeding titanically on life that is itself poetic. Imagination can commit no extravagance in attempting to foretell of our singing future when we have not half but wholly

'Transferred the battle to the brain
From bloody ground'."

It is this prophetic day that gleams through the strife, the bewilderment, the tragic perplexities, in which the people of "A Stone Came Rolling," find themselves. Though the reader may sometimes lose sight of it, we feel sure that for the author it is ever in plain view.

Has Piedmont Setting

This novel, not being a highland story, must get along without the mountain background that gave its beauty to "Call Home the Heart." But the feeling for nature glows warm in a rich Piedmont setting. Fielding Burke has lived and loved in lower lands, and shows toward their attractions the same sensitiveness that gave indefinable charm to her preceding novel.

FEB 20 1932

CALL HOME THE HEART. By Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green & Co. $2.50.

THE hopelessness of Southern mountaineer life and the bitterterness of attempted escape through industry furnishes the theme of this long and well conceived novel.

It is the story of Ishma Waycaster, who leaves her North Carolina mountain home to work in a cotton mill. There she is thrown into the struggle against oppression until overwhelming odds of wealth, organized militia and a debauched judiciary drive her back to the mountains.

Tragedy that pursues a heroic course may act as a spur to the mind and imagination of the reader, but the mean, drab and prosaic tragedies of the poor become oppressive through their futility, and Mr. Burke's book, although it is essentially human and sympathetic in tone, stresses the futile quality.

There is probably no darker spot upon our social fabric than that described with such power and restraint in this novel, and the subject is one that is receiving increasing attention from American writers. "Call Home the Heart" possesses its greatest interest, therefore, in the character of a social epic.

A. E. I.

Netha Roe Pays High Tribute To Beauty of Novel

Galveston Tribune

Netha Roe, the noted writer, in a letter to Fielding Burke, author of "Call Home the Heart" by Fielding Burke (Longmans, Green), says:

not a writer but a great person in her private life—

I have just laid down "Call Home the Heart" after reading it with deep absorption from cover to cover, and I can not resist writing my thanks to you. I don't read novels much, and having just previously finished "The Good Earth," I am about devastated by the sheer truth of life in two such remote parts of the globe. Both seem much more than novels. But you have saved me by the beauty in your book—not merely beauty existent in character and in a relationship of two great lovers. It is difficult for me to see how anyone can be possessed of the power to write so many paragraphs of compelling and almost unparalleled beauty in and of themselves without ever once letting them become a thing apart and unrelated directly to the story. A great interpreter of literature or music, with a beautiful voice, is apt at times to let his voice run away from the story in wanton lust for a tone that thrills. And I can scarcely see how an author with a gift of creating such exquisite sentences does not some times take a leap into thin air. You never do. Every dewey pearl and fiery opal makes the story clearer.

I'me being both vague and presumptuous, so I hurry on to say that the awfulness of true conditions that both your book and "The Good Earth" reveal so amazingly well, I can only endure because of two lines in a poem of yours I happen also, by strange coincidence, to have just now read for the first time:

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Haber for Tribune

not a writer but a great person in her private life—

BOOKS OF THE TIMES

By JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

FIELDING BURKE'S "A Stone Came Rolling" (Longmans, Green, $2.50), which is the Book Union choice for December, is more or less a sequel to "Call Home the Heart." Like its famous predecessor, it is about "labor unrest"—i.e., about human beings who are worried over tomorrow's bread—in the textile mills of the Carolina piedmont. It would be a mistake to damn "A Stone Came Rolling" with the wretched tag of "proletarian novel," for the story is no narrowly partisan thing, even though it is obvious where the sympathies of the author lie. What distinguishes "A Stone Came Rolling" from lesser strike novels is its understanding of the conflicting motives of a whole community. Fielding Burke—or Olive Tilford Dargan, as she used to be known when she wrote lyric poetry for the quality magazines—does not divide her people into sheep and goats; she takes them in all their inevitable gradations. Religion, jealousy, personal hatreds and curiosity all play their conditioning rôles in a novel whose dramatic axis is the conflict of capital and labor in a region that has lagged behind the rest of the country in unionization and in the granting or wresting of social services through factory legislation.

Fielding Burke has an easy power. She can turn from evocation of the ecstasy of a Spring day to the chaste ardors of hymn singing, and from both of these to the communicative hysteria of a strike meeting or a convocation of worried politicians. It comes hard for me to believe in the intensity, the drive, the wisdom, the plausibility, the charm, the beauty and the nobility of Ishma Hensley, the woman who dominates Fielding Burke's novel, for such characters come along only once or twice in a century. To the characteristics of a Joan of Arc, Ishma adds a humanity that was foreign to the Lorraine girl. But one is compelled to admit that Fielding Burke makes one feel the reality of Ishma, which is dramatic truth enough for a novelist.

Overwhelming the Reader.

Again, with the character of Verna, wife of Bly Emberson, the liberal mill owner who refuses to cut his wage scale, it is a little difficult for me to believe that religion could actually make a person so spiritually obtuse. Yet, when Verna is busy talking Bly down, or dominating her children, it must be admitted that she overwhelms the reader as well as her own brood. And, again, this is dramatic truth enough for a novelist.

When "Call Home the Heart" appeared, it was called "inconclusive." "A Stone Came Rolling" is also inconclusive, and rightly so. For it is a novel about a conflict that has not yet been concluded. The battle which Ishma Hensley fights is not only a battle for union organization of the mills of Dunmow; it is part of a battle for a new society. Or it is so far as Ishma herself is concerned. The fact that the mill workers have many conflicting views among themselves as to the uses and abuses of a union makes "A Stone Came Rolling" a book of merely transient victories. It does not bring the conflict up to the New Deal period, when it subsided into Rooseveltian truce. All of which means that Fielding Burke has still another novel about Ishma in her system. But the present novel is not too inconclusive from Ishma's own point of view. It is victory enough, for the moment, that she has been able to stir the mill workers of Dunmow out of a long lethargy.

Ishma has a Pauline capacity to make others see things her way. Derry Unthank, a doctor who owns stock in the Emberson mills, was responsible for her coming to Dunmow. Derry has long ago succumbed to Ishma's personality. So has Britt, her husband, who more or less lives to sustain the vitality of the woman he loves. And Bly Emberson, pillar of the community though he may be, is not scared when his fellow-employers try to raise the cry of "Red" against Ishma. Bly deplores his own position; he doesn't want to slash his wages, but he is faced with the prospect of having a boycott organized against him by the other mill owners. Fielding Burke plunges Bly into so many dilemmas that death is the only way out for him.

Suggesting a Sequel.

His son, Martin, however, is able to stand on his own feet. Miss Burke doesn't do much with Martin, nor with the lovely Fairinda, daughter of old Tom Jeff Ferrabee, the farmer who has been forced to relinquish his land to the bank. Yet the presence and persistence of each in the narrative suggests a sequel to "A Stone Came Rolling." Nor does Miss Burke do much with Evelyn, Martin's younger sister, nor with Ned, son of Ishma and Britt. These characters, too, are waiting for Miss Burke to round off her story of the Carolina piedmont in a trilogy.

The people in "A Stone Came Rolling" are mostly of the old American stock, mainly Scotch-Irish, that moved southward from Pennsylvania into the Appalachians. They are the same sort of people that appear in Ellen Glasgow's "Vein of Iron." And a quarrel is certain to rage over the respective merits of Miss Burke's approach and Miss Glasgow's. Miss Burke's sense of the issues involved is probably clearer than Miss Glasgow's; certainly not every human being in the piedmont towns can find a way out of economic difficulty as Miss Glasgow's characters do by going back to the subsistence of farming of our ancestors. For one thing, modern taxes and land values are high; for another, game is growing scarce. Yet each novel impresses one with its truth. Miss Glasgow is writing about the

Olive Dargan's Novel Depicts Struggle For Utopian Civilization

Asheville Citizen-Times Dec 1st 1935

Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, noted author, whose new novel, "A Stone Came Rolling," is reviewed below, makes her home on Balsam avenue in West Asheville. She writes under the pen name of Fielding Burke. The book is reviewed by Mrs. Joy Kime Benton, who resides near Hendersonville, a close friend of Mrs. Dargan. Mrs. Benton read the book chapter by chapter as it came from Mrs. Dargan's typewriter, months before the manuscript was sent to the publishers. Mrs. Benton, therefore, knows the author and the new book, as few others could. Mrs. Benton is widely known for her artistry in making hooked tapestries and has also won a considerable reputation in the literary field.—Editor.)



MRS. OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN

By JOY KIME BENTON

Robert Briffault tells us that the infant in the cradle is seized upon by vested interests and its mind shaped—or deformed — by powers organized to guard the authority of tradition. If that is true, writers who have chosen to challenge those powers have a hard road before them. But that doesn't seem to dash their courage or reduce their numbers. And their public has become so responsive that every publisher must now have at least one of their productions on his list.

Fielding Burke—which is the pen name of Olive Tilford Dargan—has made her choice, and it is not on the side of our categorical imperatives. But she is too broadly sympathetic to confine her writing to a class. She remembers the thirty millions of the middle class. She does not forget that of the thirty-eight millions of workers in this country only five millions or so are organized, and of these only a small per cent are educated in the steps necessary to release us permanently from economic bondage. The civilization or authority may be giving itself its own death-wounds, but those who survive it must be ready for their task. It can't be performed by ignoring any of those whose help we must have.

All Classes Represented

Consequently, "A Stone Came Rolling" is rich with representatives from all grades of society. They palpitate, they are vital. But it is Bly Emberson, distinctly of middle class, who is given the author's finest creative care. He is as real as one's kindest neighbor, and sympathy will follow him to the end. That end is so artistically handled that one feels the sorrow of it as personal, while retaining an aesthetic satisfaction in that sorrow. In short it scores for Aristotle.

The fading of illusion which begins with middle age for most of us is here aggravated by family dissensions that set teeth in the heart, and by business cares that weigh like millstones because recovery under the old system is hopeless and the new one is yet unformed. There is lack of will too, but we do not criticise Bly for that. In whirlwind times such as these, to keep one's footing is task enough. To exert one's will in a forward effort is almost too much to ask, even if one has a clarified, straight-going program to exert it on. Bly's mind, however, does wander over into a civilization regenerated and renewed, where his son will take the place for which he, the father, could not struggle. One may wish that he had been given stamnia for the battle. But with strength he might have lost much that makes him lovable, and he would not typify that increasing number of gentle beings whose heart-strings are taut for the fight that they shudder against entering.

A "True Believer"

In Emberson's wife, Verna, we have the "true believer," staunch, uncompromising, making havoc in the family she loves and would save. She ends triumphantly, with "wings spread," and that is in keeping with a personality as consistent and almost as finely finished as her husband's. One cannot read of her and be utterly devoid of sympathy. She will have friends, as Fielding Burke intended she should have, for that author's talent never leaves narrowness and ignorance without their

human leaven, their touch of kinship with us all. Verna Emberson's type is passing, with the stern religion that made it, but her kind is still sufficiently in evidence to justify her place in the book.

There are many evident characters, and an intermingling of life from every stratum. The mass action, pouring like a river, is sometimes forced underground, but is sure to find the sun again and gather its wayside streams. There is a spontaneous uprising, with fifteen thousand workers on the march, but they are misled and lose their hard-won victory. With a second rising under sincere leadership they are wiser and surer, and refuse to surrender.

Characters Skilfully Defined

All the characters are defined with skill that gives them the breath of life, from old Job Weygood, the jobless pencil-peddler to the autocratic Judge Anniston, who had never heard of the Mooney case. One of the most delightful among them is the old doctor, Schermerhorn. Delightful in spite of his leaning to monologue. Our last sight of him, alone at midnight by a highland fire, listening to voices creeping in to him from far nations—voices that "are young and can sing"—is comforting to us who are bidding him good-bye. Every continent sends an assuring message, full of resolutions and hope that is youth's. The last voice he hears is Asia's: "I shall sleep no more until sleep be sweet." Soon, he thought, he would be going on his own long sleep, but he would go rejoicing, knowing himself unmissed in a world wide-eyed with morning.

Here, some will think, the story ought to end. But if it did the resurging mass action would be left without its climax, and there would be another blurred picture in the role in history that the workers are now enacting. Also Ishma would be left on her mountain-top with merely a hinted connection between her and the conflict to which, for all her hereafter, she is dedicated.

Religion Plays Part

A minor theme is played by religion in the life of southern labor. The author fully recognizes the potential power of the churches. The workers of the South will not move in any direction without the sanction of their church. Given that, nothing will stop them this side of the life abundant. Fielding Burke's gentle satire is directed only toward the religion that keeps a glittering facade before an empty house. However, her call for sincerity in the pulpit contains a recognition of the fact that love and faith, without intellectual clarity, may often be found on the wrong side of questions that are important enough to involve the survival of the race. Religion is no more immutable and static than our Constitution. It must not nail men in agony to an archaic cross, but be made to serve an ever growing humanity. Here Mrs. Dargan will find sufficient backing in the latest pronouncements of the Federated Council of Churches of America.

The book has tragic features. In the passing of Britt there is a poignancy hard to bear, though it is mitigated by a certain magnificence and beauty for which we are grateful. But as a whole the story conveys a feeling of undefeat, a conviction that the fuller life is coming speedily and for us all. Under the new planning the forgotten man will drop out of economics, every baby will have its milk and orange juice, and talent will leap to its mark unshackled! Propaganda to be sure, if propaganda means writing of something that does not yet exist and making you believe in it. That is difficult enough, as admitted by Mrs. Dargan long ago in an article published by the Chicago Tribune in 1917—the year that she, Cloyd Head, and Sara Teasdale, were prize winners in literature and were invited to air their opinions in the Tribune.

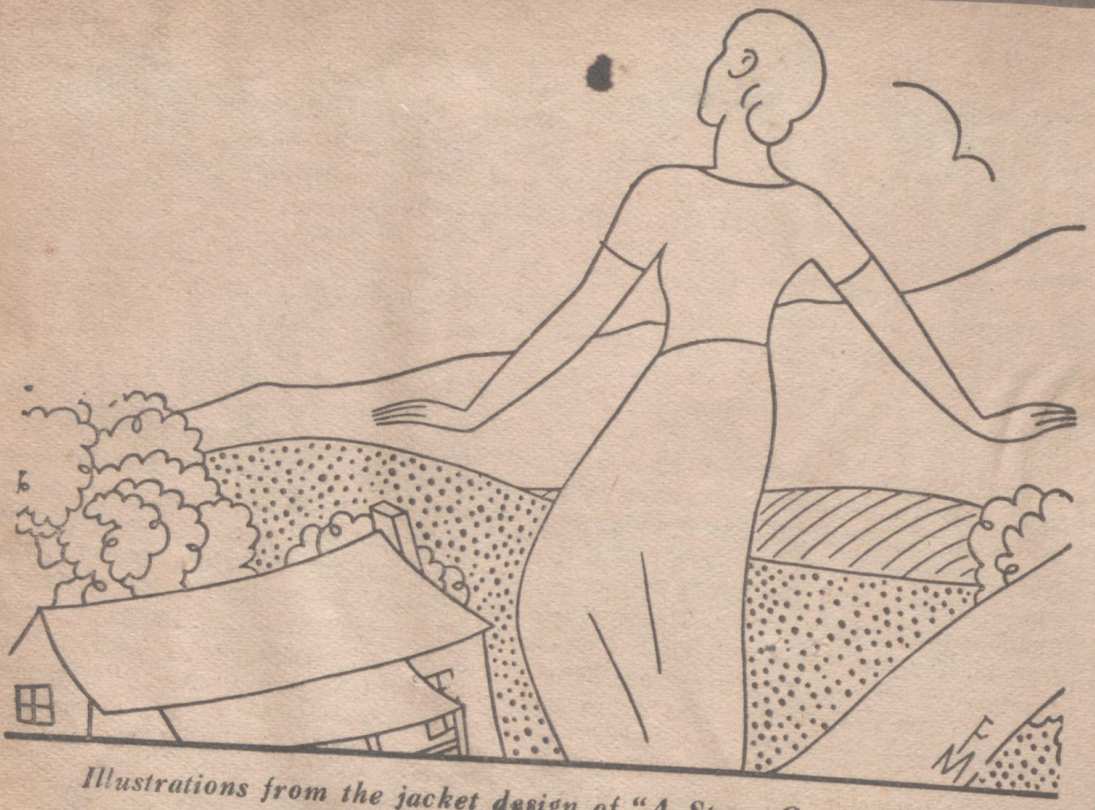
She said then that the coming change was as significant in our evolution as our passage from sea to land, the invention of the tool, or the beginning of language, and spoke of the difficulty in which writers, particularly poets, were placed in a society on the brink of transmutation: "We can achieve an architecture of song on the outposts of consciousness . . . we can build with an experience not fully at home in our veins . . . but we cannot raise our Theban walls where no land is. Art builds its new structures, but it must be with material that is a possible familiarity in the social mind. Nevertheless, many writers today are venturing out where no land is."

And if any one has the prerogative for making art serve the turn of the propagandist, surely it is one who, like Mrs. Dargan, has shown a capacity for producing art in its long accepted form and substance.

Critics Praise Work

Critics, such as Stedman, William Archer, Richard Whiting, William J. Rolfe, George Edward Woodberry, and others of like authority, consider her dramas in blank verse the "high-water mark since Shakespeare.' With her first volume of poems she was welcomed as a lyricist of beauty and power. Her sonnet sequence in memory of her husband leapt to rank with the "Sonnets from the Portugese." Some said it surpassed them. When she turned to prose, George Herbert Palmer, himself a master of English, pronounced her too a master.

Edmund Clarence Stedman hailed her as one who would carry on "the great tradition." But even then, if he had studied her writings more closely, he would have detected the vein of what we are forced to call "propaganda." The vision of a genuine civilization—not a baffled attempt at one—with the desire to be a part of its formation, has been with her all the way. To quote again from the Tribune article of an earlier day: "By 'liberation' we do not mean merely the freeing of millions from the blind fatalism of poverty. All classes will cast off weights equally repressive. Teachers shall have visions



Illustrations from the jacket design of "A Stone Came Rolling"

Herald-Tribune - Preceding article

Herald-Tribune
New York N Y



Fielding Burke

N Y World-Telegram

MAR 25 1936

The Woman Today has just arranged for the serialization of Fielding Burke's book "A Stone Came Rolling," recently published by Longmans Green. The first instalment will appear in the April issue, which will also include a story by Grace Lumpkin, an article on the minimum wage by Mrs. Elinor Herrick, "Labor," by Francis J. Gorman, vice president of the United Textile Workers, an article on the Negro Congress by Louise Thompson and "A Word to the Wise," by Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, which will be a permanent feature of the magazine.

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FIELDING BURKE: *A Proletarian Tale With No Moscow Message*

News-Week Dec 9-38

A STONE CAME ROLLING. By Fielding Burke. 412 pages. 80,000 words. Longmans, Green, New York. $2.50.

Miss Fielding Burke, cheery, gray-haired proletarian novelist of North Carolina, conspicuously avoids the usual proletarian formulas in her novels as well as in real life. Though she has worked alongside poor white farmers and wage-earners, and has helped feed hungry strikers during the past two years, she belongs to no radical organization. And while she writes like a fighting Socialist, she does not overload her story with sex, monotonous horrors, or sermons from Moscow.

"A Stone Came Rolling," sequel to her first novel, "Call Home the Heart," describes labor troubles in the imaginary mill-town of Dunmow. Ishma, a somewhat over-exalted laborite from the mountains, promotes two strikes, one of which fails, while the other hangs in the air at the end of the story. Bly Emberson, mill owner, is converted to the workers' cause but dies before he can do anything about it. The tale shifts back and forth between capitalists, laborers, and religious fanatics.

Miss Burke believes that Protestant fundamentalism has done more than anything to delay class struggles in her State. Whether or not readers share her apparent enthusiasm for revolution, they will recognize her ability to portray strikes, riots, lynchings, and the widely differing types gathered in industrialized Southern towns.

"Highland Annals"

IN "HIGHLAND ANNALS" Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, now a resident of Asheville, has given the world a literary masterpiece which pictures the people of this mountain country of ours as they really are. There could be no better criticism made of it than the statement of one of the most prominent and best read men of this city: "As I turned its entrancing pages, I recognized all its principal characters. They were drawn with such photographic realism that I, who have hunted with them and enjoyed their hospitality and spent many a night in their homes, could not help recognizing them."

Consisting of eight stories, most of which appeared in magazines, "Highland Annals" portrays "a people who look to life for their drama instead of the stage and the morning papers." Its interest never flags. Its beauty of description is charming from start to finish. Its style, as lucid as it is vigorous, is a triumph in simplicity, ideally suited to the business of revealing the true character of the mountaineer, whom few outsiders have known intimately and fewer still truly portrayed.

It is the story of a woman who, going among these people to take possession of a farm left to her "in the Unakas," at first has to combat their reticence but, as soon as their confidence is won, is admitted to their circle as one of its beloved members. She shares, and gives the reader a share, in all their activities, revealing their independence, their code, their patience under suffering, the valor of their struggle for a living, their unfailing hospitality.

There are many such touches as the caution given her by Len when she proposes to acquaint a neighbor with her suspicion of his having made away with some of her property, a suspicion impossible to substantiate with evidence. "You see, Mis' Dolly, they ain't no way to 'proach a man on sech a subject.

Editorial by John Ray Jr.

"Lessen you're carry in' a guess"

× Quotation from Gen'l Theodore F. Davidson

Life in a Typical

Fielding Burke Writes a Warmly Hu



A STONE CAME ROLLING.
By Fielding Burke . . . *412 pp.*
. . . New York: Longmans, Green and Company . . . $2.50.

Reviewed by
BERNARD SMITH

IN Fielding Burke's novels there is a certain quality which some of us once feared was lost among the proletarian writers. It is the quality of "heart"—of a sympathy for the characters of the story that grows out of love rather than hate or bitterness. What she feels about the exploited and the hungry springs neither from experience nor an intellectual conviction. More than any other radical novelist of our times, she has selected and assimilated her material emotionally.

It is a curious and perhaps significant fact that the leading writers of the Left are among our most sophisticated artists. Consider, for example, John Dos Passos, Robert Cantwell, William Rollins and Erskine Caldwell. Fielding Burke does not belong with them aesthetically, although she is allied with them in her social sympathies. They are realists and satirists. She is a romanticist.

Her new novel expresses her romantic orientation. It is a story of the people in a mill town in the Piedmont country of North Carolina. Here are not simply workers, black and white, but the entire fabric of the community—farmers, merchants, mill owners, shopkeepers, ministers and politicians. She seeks not merely to picture the effects of poverty on the mill hands, but on all who live in and around the town, which means that her goal is to demonstrate how the economic and political forces of this transitional age are subtly changing the daily life, the physical habits and the aspiration of every one who is not a hermit in a mountain cave. But she does this in terms of human beings. Her men and women are warm and alive, not symbolic distillations. If they suffer from anything, it is from idealization.

This book deals wth the characters of her previous novel, "Call Home the Heart," and carries on their story. Here are Ishma, the superb mountain woman, who came down to the mills, worked, studied and became a leader among the rebels; her husband, Britt, the farmer who loved people and the land with an equal, mystic devotion; Bly, the kindly, generous mill owner; Verna, his psychopathic wife, a sex-starved, religious fanatic; their children, dominated but not crushed by their mother; Fairinda, the angelic, almost unbelievably lovely girl who is forced into the mills by her father's failure to keep his farm from the banks; Derry, the doctor who has dedicated his life to the workers' cause; Father Litmore, the Episcopal priest, who attempts to preach the true message of Christ to the landlords and bankers, and a host of others—labor organizers, mountaineers, newspaper men, police and scabs.

The time is 1932. Wage cuts and layoffs have multiplied. Even those who are not actually unemployed live in fear of immediate starvation. But not in Blairwood, the town's wealthy suburb, which still is placid, well-fed and contented. Then suddenly there is the crackling fire of unrest. A spontaneous, unorganized strike breaks cut, sweeping fifteen thousand "hands" into fervent solidarity and militancy. The strike fails because of the naïveté of one of its leaders and the chicanery of another. For a time there is "peace"—an artificial, nervous, morbid peace. The organizers continue their work, made easy by the introduction of the "speed-up" into the mills. Negroes filter into the union. Help and en-

Carolina Mill Town

nan, and So Unique, Proletarian Novel



couragement come from other unions all over the country. And at the end another strike breaks out—this one stormy, purposeful, desperate. The book ends while this second strike is still in progress.

To the extent that "A Stone Came Rolling" is the story of a union and a strike, it follows rather closely the pattern established by earlier proletarian novels. Where it differs from them is in the degree of its emphasis on the personalities and the private lives of its characters. Indeed, the personal narrative is here as important as the political. The truth is that Fielding Burke is less interested in the epic and dramatic nature of her material than in the intimate and emotional effects of the class struggle upon individuals as such. She keeps our attention riveted to Bly's frustration in his relations with his wife, to Britt's helplessly ecstatic love for Ishma and hers for him, complicated by her refusal to make it her entire life while there is yet injustice and suffering, to Fairinda's first fumbling experiences with love and defeat and the agony of oppressive labor, to Derry's efforts to suppress his sensitiveness and sentimentality, to Verna's horrible spiritual corruption, to her children's search for a reasonable and free existence. Thus ultimately the book becomes a domestic novel of men and women who have been ennobled or corrupted by their environment, rather than a picture of the environment itself—a novel of sentiment rather than ideas. She is aware of it, for there is one memorable passage that reveals the inner motive of her story-telling. Ishma and her son are alone. He says to her: "I wonder if I'll ever see a human being. . . . I'd rather see a human being than anything." Ishma replies: "You'll get your wish, son. In half a century perhaps. It won't take long for them to grow up after society quits maiming and deforming everybody born into it."

When a novelist is animated by such an emotion, her sympathies are so broad and deep that they extend to every one. There is not one character in the book whom she has not taken to her heart, has not understood and "forgiven." Her love for people (like Britt's) is so great that it washes them of all that is ugly and repulsive. In one respect this is dangerous, in so far as her art is concerned, for it makes all her characters—workers and owners both—too good, too pure, too gentle. Our credulity is sometimes stretched to the limit by the suggestion that there is so much graciousness and humanity on earth. Perhaps, however, that is our fault. Perhaps we too are "corrupted." Nevertheless, I feel sure that for the purposes of the novel, Fielding Burke has a little too much love. Her excess of emotion leads her occasionally to lushness in writing. A little coldness or bitterness about some people or things would probably result in pruning her style, making it crisper and simpler. Moreover, she should learn that dealing with social problems must be an intellectual as well as an emotional process. There are moments in her book in which we cannot help feeling that the political ideas are insufficiently clarified. I am thinking particularly of the relationship between the Negro and white workers and above all of the experiment with a worker-owned factory instituted by Bly's son.

But these considerations do not detract from the appeal of the story. I can't imagine any one failing to respond to her noble characters and the heroic, tragic drama they enact. The emotion in which they and their destinies were conceived by the author is so obviously fine and sincere, and so obviously uncalculated, that even the most cynical of readers will find himself feeling precisely what she does about life in this typical Carolina mill town—which to her is realy life in America.

natural beauty is certainly an asset and one is glad that she is not, like some of our writers, ashamed to express the emotion that a lovely scene arouses in her. But her imagery sometimes seems too purely romantic, and in describing emotional crises—the death of Britt, for example—she occasionally comes to the very edge of the gulf of sentimentality. This is a minor criticism, though justice requires that it be recorded. Its chief significance is that it reminds us of the Olive Tilford Dargan who had written for twenty-five years before Fielding Burke appeared. It reminds us that Fielding Burke has come by a more difficult path than most of our young writers have had to follow, and the fact that she belongs, as she indubitably does, with men and women who were not born when her first book was published is a tribute to the creative force of the revolutionary movement, to the power of the poetic imagination and to Fielding Burke.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

Social Significance

The novel is about a part of the South I do not happen to know intimately at first hand, and so others will have to speak of the accuracy of the detail of its picture of Dunmow.

Otherwise, it is a book with many moments of genuine emotion and of beauty, and it is, as was its predecessor, important because it deals with socially significant material, a changing South, and especially because its potential revolutionaries are of old and sound American stock.

I cannot fail to say, however, that it often reminded me of some of the intellectual efforts of the pre-revolutionary Russians, kind-hearted and nobly intentioned, who must have had to turn over in their graves a good many times at the barbarities of the present rulers of the country.

I am not saying that what has happened may not have been unavoidable during a revolution, but I am saying that gentle revolutions, such as this novelist wishes, sound impossible—or at least extremely improbable—in a world of human beings.

There is, too, the thought that if she doesn't like the new regime she is not likely to be allowed to write propaganda novels against it, or not, at least for a good many years after it arrives.

The book is the third choice of the newly organized Book Union, which is engaged in trying to popularize Left Wing literature, and is sold to members of that organization at a greatly reduced price.

("A Stone Came Rolling," by Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green, $2.50; 412 pages.)

comprehend than it is to accept. She is an idealized heroine.

The backbone of the belief of such Communistic sympathizers as Fielding Burke is that the workers and their friends possess virtues that are denied to others, otherwise what reason is there to suppose that in actual practice they would manage the system any better than it is at present so sadly mismanaged?

This, I know perfectly well, is a throwback to a personal belief in the individual rather than the system or class. I present it because I remain to be convinced of its incorrectness, whether my faith in it is a result of prejudice or of a fairly long and thorough acquaintance with nearly all kinds of people.

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A Southern Town

"A Stone Came Rolling" sets out to be a complete presentation of life in the North Carolina town of Dunmow, which has textile mills and furniture factories. Many of its workers are mountain people. The time is 1932, when wages are being cut below the subsistence levels and when Ishma and Britt, her husband, have just moved onto a farm near the town.

A strike comes, the leader being a religious man, who tries for a reasonable settlement with the mill owners. An agreement is made and violated, and in the end there is violence; a strike leader is beaten almost to death and then given castor oil. A girl picket is knocked down and stamped, so that she dies. Workers are bayoneted and shot.

Through all this runs the story of the well-meaning Bly Emberson, manager of a mill, of his loathsomely religious and oversexed wife, Verne, and of their children, Martin, Evelyn and Lorene. Martin finally goes over to the workers and falls in love with the charming Fairinda, the daughter of a dispossessed farmer, Tom Jeff Ferrabee, of old American and Revolutionary stock.

Considerable emphasis is laid upon the religious elements in the community, which, like most Southern towns, goes in for many churches of many kinds, but whose essential Christianity is not very important. It is plain enough that our author is at odds with the church, and certainly no one at all familiar with the situation can deny the truth of many of her strictures.

Ishma's principal supporters are, in addition to Bly Emberson, who loves her, as do most men who see her even once, are both physicians, the intimation being that men of science cannot fail to recognize the truth of the Communistic doctrines, although one of the doctors is also under Ishma's personal spell.

Books on Our Table

Fielding Burke Goes On With Her Picture Of Changing South

N.Y. Evening Post

By HERSCHEL BRICKELL

FIELDING BURKE, like Grace Lumpkin, is a Southern novelist who through close contact with the industrial situation in the South has sickened of the cruelties of existing conditions and decided that the workers must and shall build a paradise of their own.

Her first piece of long fiction, which came after a long apprenticeship in literature under the name of Olive Tilford Dargan, during which she wrote poetry, plays and a considerable amount of prose, was "Call Home the Heart," a novel that made a distinct impression on both the reviewers and the public.

Its sequel, "A Stone Came Rolling," deals with many of the same characters of the earlier work but is a complete entity. It will, I suspect, be carried further, as the present book ends upon a note that seems to call for a further following of the fortunes of several people.

The work is romantic in its essence, or so it seems to one who finds the author's compassion and sincerity more understandable and sympathetic than her remedy.

A woman so intensely moved by suffering is not of the stuff of which bloody revolutionaries are made. She believes that the present economic system can be changed by the peaceful conversion of the middle class to Communism, which seems to me a fantastic dream, although it is only fair to say that she is closer to the problem and to the spread of Communistic doctrines than I am.

My own feeling is that in so thoroughly bourgeois a country as this, even making the fullest allowance for the findings of Lewis Corey, Herbert Agar and many others, of the changes in the makeup of the middle class through its rapid loss of control of the means of production, we are unlikely to see the change she wishes and expects without a long period of agony.

This leaves the question of whether or not the results would be worth the suffering, and here it is that many of us who are aroused by what we know of the Southern situation come to an inevitable clash of opinions.

+ + +

It Is Propaganda

History alone can determine who is right; it can only be said that if Fielding Burke is correct in thinking that the abolition of capitalism would put an end to all economic evils, laying aside certain other important considerations, and that such a result could be brought about without a resort to prolonged violence, it would be indecent to differ from her.

So much, then, for the idea behind her fiction, which is, naturally, propaganda for the great change. Is it good fiction otherwise?

The answer is in the affrmative, with certain reservations. It seems to me that in her great kindness to her sympathizers with the revolution there is not so much a desire to paint one side white and the other black, inevitable in propaganda, as there is a perfectly understandable sympathy with the characters who represent the author's views.

There are few things harder in human relations than to believe in the good faith and intelligence of people who disagree with us; we find support frequently for our own lurking uncertainties by calling our opponents scoundrels, not contenting ourselves with thinking that they may be merely stupid because they do not think as we do. By the same token, those who agree are both brilliant and honest.

Therefore, it seems to me, that the essentially romantic picture here presented of such revolutionaries as the woman Ishma, who will be remembered from "Call Home the Heart," is easier to

Christian Science Monitor

The Left Wing

IT HAS been noted with interest by more than one student of literature, and with some dissatisfaction by certain readers, that this is, conspicuously, the era of the proletarian novel. If we run through a list of the more important novels published in Great Britain and the United States during the past year, we find in them a decided drift to the left. Though the great body of English-speaking readers considers itself, and no doubt is in the main, largely conservative, nevertheless much of the fiction they are reading is not so.

The proletarian novel is no new invention of the 1930's. Perhaps "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was the first in America. Bret Harte approached the theme, Stephen Crane dealt with it more boldly. Three decades ago Upton Sinclair began raising his voice in behalf of plain men. Jack London, too, protested against the established order. H. G. Wells, through drawing his characters chiefly from the [illegible] the middle class, has always been an advocate of change, always wanting to do something about existing conditions. But in the numbers of exponents, and more than that, in the social theories expressed, the leftward movement is stronger now than ever before.

* * *

AT FIRST, PERHAPS, writers seized upon the topic of the workers and their plight because they saw in it great dramatic and emotional possibilities. Their interest was chiefly artistic. The writers themselves might not yet have faced for themselves the difference between spending a bus fare and wearing out shoe-leather, but they looked into some such situation as that and concluded that the way Mr. and Mrs. John Doe and their children felt about it made a good story. It was not long, however, before we were getting novels that pursued the situation into its causes, with the writer's own experience or first-hand observation blazing into emotion or into a solution that he was bound to promulgate. So came a genuine proletarian fiction. Many plots are now being built around conflicts between capital and labor. The chief characters are men and women who possess nothing but their two hands—workers in the mines, the [illegible] mills, the textile industries, the cotton fields, or not working.

* * *

ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION, these novels are on the workers' side. The writers are interested not merely to present a dramatic situation—too often a tragedy—but they have also their theories, their solutions for the problem.

The situation of labor and capital, made concrete in the lives of individual workers and employers, is a perfect theme for a novel because in large proportion it contains the elements that make a good story. It is well-nigh universal in its interest, it is controversial, it is dramatic, especially it is human, bitterly poignant, and inextricably involved with the individual problems of life, love, and the pursuit of happiness. We may not like it. We may shun labor novels, we may be utterly opposed to the solutions that many of them offer, but we cannot truthfully deny that they contain good material.

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TECHNICALLY SPEAKING, THEN, a novelist can not find a better subject, providing—and this proviso is one to be printed in capital letters and underlined with red ink—providing he does not sacrifice character portrayal and emotional interest to his zeal for making converts to his theories. For the raw material of all novels is human nature—the emotions, motives, desires, and aspirations of men and women as persons, not as classes or groups, and world problems are useless as fiction material unless translated effectively into the urgent experiences of three-dimensional characters.

Some novelists do that. For example, Fielding Burke in "A Stone Came Rolling"—

> "A stone came rollin'—
> Rollin' through Dixie—
> Rollin' through Dixie—
> Tearin' down de kingdom of de boss."

The implication of the workers' song—a revised *spiritual*—from which the author derived her title, is clearly a summons to the workers and a challenge to capital. The scene is a southern industrial city, the characters are workers and their families, strikers, sympathizers, strike-breakers, and some employers. The tone of the book is openly class-conscious, and the writing is ardent. There is no mistaking the genuine evangelistic fervor with which Fielding Burke regards her material—material gained from years of observation during which she changed from a poet-dramatist to a propagandist-novelist. Twenty years ago, under her real name, Olive Tilford Dargan was writing conventional lyric poetry and poetic dramas. She belonged to the group, headed by William Vaughan Moody, who believed in a poetic renaissance on the American stage. Of late her sympathy for the underprivileged has turned her to the more polemical prose—but still beauty-tinctured prose.

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WITH LESS FIRE and force, Tom Tippett has told, in "Horse Shoe Bottoms," about the way the miners live and the conditions under which they work in a coal town of the Middle West. In "Honey in the Horn," the latest Harper Prize novel, H. L. Davis gives an episodic account of all kinds of people—many of them proletarian—who made up the population of Oregon in its earlier days—herders, threshers, sawmill workers, along with those who were in a small way, owners, such as horse traders, storekeepers, and homesteaders. This is straight reporting, with no tinge of class-consciousness—proletarian without being in the least leftish or rightish, for that matter. Just unadulterated folk fiction.

Another prize-winning novel is "Marching! Marching!" by Clara Weatherwax, recipient of the award offered by the *New Masses* and the John Day Publishing Company for the best novel on an American proletarian theme. This recital of the details of a strike among sawmill and pulp-mill workers proclaims the writer's sympathies and convictions.

In different manner, Robert Rylee has presented another proletarian group in "Deep Dark River," a story about the kind of justice that was handed out to a Negro in a southern court. Quietly, impressively, young Mr. Rylee has reported Mose Southwick's arrest, trial, and sentence, and the distortion of justice involved. Mose—untrained, unordained preacher, self-respecting worker in a cotton field—has been made the symbol of all whom prejudice hunts down.

* * *

WE HAVE SAID that many of the current proletarian novels show a strong element of propaganda. Something must be done about these things, the writers cry, and most of them [illegible] to go far. A. J. Cronin strikes a different note. In "The Stars Look Down" he has written a forthright and moving narrative about miners and also about mine-owners, on England's north coast. He shows the miners at home, at work, on strike, trusting to the Labor Party, and not yet on sure ground. He shows unscrupulous owners and fair-minded humanitarian owners; and he clearly implies, not only in his title but elsewhere, that he thinks the stars will look down upon pretty much the same kind of social organism a hundred years hence. In one sense this is not a satisfying book. It does not draw issues in stark black or white, or offer a working solution, or advocate some form of industrial revolution; but, as a work of art, it satisfies. It is honestly intent on showing how things have been for the past thirty years with the men who excavate England's fuel.

Since Dr. Cronin's chief purpose has been to write a good novel, rather than to champion a cause, his work is free from the quality of exaggeration which is the common fault of all propagandist fiction. That, and monotony. Either for vehement overemphasis on the one hand or for a dreary level of sameness in drab and oft-repeated situations on the other, the proletarian novel has often been justly criticized. Neither fault is inevitable. Neither is universal. Many of the current novels come clear of the accusation. But they are swinging so far to the left that it is about time to look for a change, and safe to predict that soon will appear some novels that come around the half-circle to the right.

WINNIFRED KING RUGG

Better Than "Call Home the Heart"

New Masses Dec. 17 '35

A STONE CAME ROLLING, by Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green and Co. $2.50. (Book Union Choice for December.)

MORE than thirty years ago, Olive Tilford Dargan, who now writes under the name of Fielding Burke, published her first book, a collection of plays in verse. Other books, both of plays and lyrics, appeared during the next two decades and she became known as a poet with a strong love of natural beauty. From such of her verse as I have read, I gather that she was always a humanitarian, but certainly the reader was less conscious of her social sympathies than of her intense and perhaps mystical preoccupation with nature.

Then, three years ago, *Call Home the Heart* was published. In its early chapters it showed a rare ability to portray the beauty of the Carolina mountains and what seemed to be a thorough understanding of their people. But the novel did not fall into the mistake that has vitiated so much regional literature: it did not try to set forth the dead past as if it were the living present. On the contrary, it bravely carried its characters from the mountains to the industrial towns of the South, and showed how new forces were creating new problems. It did more than that: it selected types of experience that indicated how these problems could be solved. The humanitarianism of the early work had grown into revolutionary passion.

Call Home the Heart was a sincere and moving novel, but its faults were obvious. The description of its industrial struggle seemed incidental, an episode between the heroine's departure from the mountains and her return. That she should was natural enough, but the emphasis was unfortunate. Moreover, the impression that the strike was only of secondary importance was heightened by the fact that the author was unmistakably much more at home in describing the mountains than she was in [illegible]

dustry, the difficulties that face organized labor and the tactics that are being evolved to meet those difficulties. From this point of view, *A Stone Came Rolling* is a challenge to the revolutionary novelists who have allowed themselves to be beaten by ignorance: Fielding Burke has shown that writers can learn.

The novel is not, of course, a strike handbook, but simply the story of a group of southern people, especially Ishma Hensley, the heroine of *Call Home the Heart,* her husband Britt, and Bly Emberson and his family. The strike that takes place in Dunmow is a crucial event in their lives and, therefore, Fielding Burke makes it her business to describe the strike intelligently. But she is primarily interested in the characters, as she should be, and she handles them beautifully. Britt, who was a little shadowy in *Call Home the Heart,* emerges very clearly in this novel and shares the honors with Ishma. Bly Emberson, a manufacturer who wants to be good and is beaten by the system, is a character worthy of a place beside them. And the whole picture of life in Dunmow is firm and well-rounded. One of the incidental weaknesses of the first novel was the unconvincing portrayal of the upper class; here even the most reactionary employers are real persons.

The great quality that Fielding Burke has in both her novels is warmth, and it is a quality that is too often lacking in revolutionary fiction. One never feels for a moment that she is outside the struggle she portrays; she is in it, heart and soul. The reader cannot help but respond to her admiration for Ishma, her tenderness towards Britt, her respect for Bly Emberson. These are real persons to her, and she makes them real to us, and makes us feel about them as she feels. Her dislikes are as strong as her loyalties: she understands Verna Emberson but detests her; she shudders at the stinking hypocrisy of most of the clergymen; she is grieved and angry at the treason of some of the workers. And her revolutionary hope is real, too; one feels it as a living, irresistible force in her life.

It is perhaps only in the matter of language that Fielding Burke betrays the fact that her literary powers developed in an earlier day than ours. Her appreciation of

the fight to smash down labor and Bergoff finds easy pickings as corporation after corporation calls upon Bergoff for "his services."

Some day in a socialist America children will study the history of our period. A special course, Capitalist Villainy, will undoubtedly be given. Somewhere in that study there

Better Than "Call Home the Heart"

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Whatever its faults, *Call Home the Heart* was, in its own right, a remarkable novel, and it was even more remarkable in the light of its author's previous work. It is, then, as extraordinary as it is pleasant to report that *A Stone Came Rolling* is a much better book than *Call Home the Heart,* and is strong precisely where its predecessor was weak. Not only is the struggle of labor an integral part of the book; it is handled with knowledge and insight. Fielding Burke understands the economic problems of southern industry, the difficulties that face organized labor and the tactics that are being evolved to meet those difficulties. From this point of view, *A Stone Came Rolling* is a challenge to the revolutionary novelists who have allowed themselves to be beaten by ignorance: Fielding Burke has shown that writers can learn.

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Written with Love

Daily Worker Jan 28 1936

A STONE CAME ROLLING, by Fielding Burke. Book Union choice for December. New York International Publishers. $2.50.

By Moissaye J. Olgin

YOU read "A Stone Came Rolling" with a peculiar feeling of joy. It is almost a sensuous joy. The fabric of the narrative is saturated with so much light and color, its pattern is so lovely that this feeling of keen pleasure never leaves the reader even at moments when the story itself is harrowing.

This is due, in no small degree, to the fact that Fielding Burke writes as much for herself as for the readers. She is uncovering a world for herself. She is exploring its various aspects. Though she may be horrified and full of indignation, she is also delighted. This is the artist in her. She takes the rough and often bloody stuff of life and weaves it into design that are enchanting to herself. This is why, when we delve into her novels, we find ourselves in a world apart, with an atmosphere of its own, with skies and land and people of a certain order quite different although very real.

This feeling of joy is to a large extent produced by the humane quality of Burke's writings. They are such lovely people—all those whom she loves. Even those whom she hates have human qualities. The more you read about the characters introduced by Fielding Burke the more you become aware of the author's all-pervading love and compassion for humanity. Sometimes you wish she had less sympathy if not less understanding for the enemy class.

* * *

"A STONE CAME ROLLING" is, to a degree, a sequel to "Call Home the Heart" by the same author. At least the principal figures, the setting, the social forces, are the same. But there is a change too. There is a difference in the spirit of both novels. Between the first and the second novel the time-change is much greater than the three years or so that have elapsed since "Call Home the Heart" made its appearance. These three years have been momentous in the history of the American working class; they have seen the beginning of the broad mass labor movement that is destined to reshape our country.

In "A Stone Came Rolling" we have the same Southern workers with their struggle against the mill owners that we had in "Call Home the Heart." But there is a new mood. There is a greater hope. There is a sterner determination. The labor unions have come to stay. The revolutionary National Textile Workers' Union is joining the United Textile Union. It is fighting for a better leadership. It is going to place real working-class leaders in place of such weak-kneed individuals as the little fellow named Kik who try "to make shoe-string unions stand up in a blowing wind." The workers, through experience, through the plotting of the bosses, often make a mess of things. But —"Look at the hundreds of little messes all over the Carolinas. Don't they encourage you? Don't they tell you what is in every worker's heart? One red-hot word—revolt. All our leaderless, spontaneous rebellions tell you that. All our defeats tell you that. Didn't fifteen thousand march right here in Dunmow without any union at all? When they march again it won't be behind any pinhead Kik leading them to Camp Starvation. What did they learn that day? That they could stop fifty thousand mills as easily as fifty. They learned that there were other industries besides textiles. And in every ne of them they could do the same thing. And they could do it at the same time. To learn that much is not collapse. It is victory. In two years—maybe one—you'll see. It looks like we're beat into the ditch, but we've only begun to build our front."

* * *

THIS feeling of the imminence of a great rising wave, the imminence of victory of the working class, permeates the whole book. In this respect the book is more mature than "Call Home the Heart." It correctly reflects the spirit of the time. The author seems to have gained a clearer understanding and a more correct appreciation of the conflict of social forces. She devotes much more time to an elaboration of these forces than she did in her first novel. She is more outspoken. Her sympathies are unmistakable. This is what makes "A Stone Came Rolling" an important contribution to working-class literature. Besides the organized employers and the State machinery as their executive agency, Fielding Burke introduces the church as one of the most potent factors in the South arrayed on the side of the exploiters. This element is new compared with her first novel. Her approach to the Negro question is now free of the mistakes that marred "Call Home the Heart." The working-class reader, white or Negro, will realize that in unity of black and white lies the strength of the exploited.

* * *

WHILE "A Stone Came Rolling" is, in this respect, a step forward compared with "Call Home the Heart," it has its drawbacks, especially as regards construction. The novel spreads out too much. It attempts to give the life of a whole community. In "Call Home the Heart" there was one direct line—the life of Ishma Hensley. In "A Stone Came Rolling" the central figure—if one may say so—is Dunmow, a mill town in the Piedmont. But because Dunmow has to be split up into groups and individuals each of whom must be taken up and described, the story often lacks that striking power, that relentlessness and that freshness of approach with which Ishma was treated in "Call Home the Heart."

Perhaps this is due mainly to the author's treatment of Ishma. Fielding Burke loves Ishma. In fact, she endows her with all possible gifts. But Ishma in the second novel is disappointing. "I don't like being an accident. And I don't want to run away," she says in one of her dialogues with her farmer husband, Britt. But the fact is that Ishma is if not an accident then a hanger on. She does not run away. On the contrary, she deliberately braves danger. She almost, one may say, courts disaster when she gets up on the platform to talk Red to a revivalist meeting. Her husband is killed in the scuffle that follows. In the concluding scenes of the novel she is thrown into jail and beaten up for marching at the workers' demonstration. But you cannot escape the question: What is she after all? She is not an organizer, not a leader; she is not known to belong to the Communist Party. She has no definite place in the labor movement. With all her apparent magnetism, with all her intellect, with all her wisdom she remains on the sidelines.

* * *

ANOTHER central figure of the novel, Bly Emberson, deserves even less than Ishma to occupy so much space in the narrative. Bly Emberson is a white raven. He is an intellectual manufacturer who, in the course of his dealings with the workers, becomes convinced that they are right. He is converted to the Communist ideal. In his fight against his class, his wife and himself, he perishes.

Such things happen. But it is questionable whether a revolutionary novelist should pay so much attention to the vagaries of Emberson's mind. Sometimes it appears as if Bly Emberson were the main hero of the book. Still, he is only a freak. He is not characteristic of his class. That magnificent creative energy and penetrating psychological insight by means of which Burke makes us love a manufacturer gone "wrong," could be used for more constructive purposes. There seems to be altogether too much of the admixture of bourgeois sympathizers talking Communism—like Dr. Unthank and Dr. Schermerhorn and Martin, the son of Bly Emberson—although it must be said that the main body of the novel, its foundations, are working class.

* * *

WHAT we want to emphasize is that, with Fielding Burke's greater maturity and with her inimitable talent as narrator and character observer, she could write a more straight-from-the-shoulder class-struggle novel, the readers of which would feel that it comes from the working class itself rather than from somebody who is sympathetic to the workers' struggle. That Fielding Burke can write such works is warranted by numerous scenes, mass scenes and individual characters in "A Stone Came Rolling" where we find clarity of vision, sureness of hand and a revolutionary ardor that makes them equal to the best in revolutionary literaure. The description of the spontaneous strike of fifteen thousand mill workers is magnificent. The atmosphere of confidence in the their own powers that grows among the workers with the development of the strike is truly inspiring. You feel how the workers, from a class in themselves, become a class for themselves (Marx). The epic scenes during the July Fourth celebration, with the unemployed appearing in united ranks singing their hymn of hunger is unforgettable. Kik, the union organizer who eats out of the hands of the employers, is well drawn. The vigilante attack on Eph, the fight during the revivalist meeting, the church with its meddling in the conflict between labor and capital—all this impresses itself on the reader indelibly.

I must confess that I have seldom read a novel with such avid interest and such unflagging pleasure outside of the Russian classics.

NESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 8, 1936
Columbia State

THE LATE PEGRAM DARGAN

Tribute by S. P. Verner

To the Editor of The State.

The name of Pegram Dargan in the "Personalia" column of The State recently is the occasion of this effort to write a few words about a man whose distinguished widow was the subject of that column. Having been out of touch with papers which may have contained tributes by others, I do not know whether any one else has done what I try to do here—to convey the fact of the unusual character of Mrs. Dargan's husband, as it was seen by one who once had peculiar opportunities to know it. It is now 47 years since I first became acquainted with the young man from Darlington who entered South Carolina college the same year I did and at once assumed a commanding leadership in the freshman class by reason of his character and scholarship. In the next year we became roommates, besides being classmates.

The long years have not dimmed the brightness of the memory of his personality, nor have the distance and ofttimes the darkness of many strange lands and crowded experiences clouded the radiance of a great soul. Pegram Dargan did not live to carry to fruition the promise of his youth; but to some of us who survived him he imparted of his spirit an influence which mightily helped through deep waters and along many a thorny trail.

As a scholar he was thorough, accurate, versatile and profound. I doubt if his record for the two years he was in the college was ever equalled for such a period. He made the highest grades in each of his subjects with equal distinction. He would not allow any study or subject to baffle or defeat him. He could make the most of his minutes. His analytical faculties were acute. He loved the classics, but science attracted him no less. In those days specialization had not yet gripped education as it did later. His mentality reacted to the stimuli of a comprenhensive culture.

In relation to his fellow students he was remarkable for his attitude of truly democratic sympathy. Although by birth, tradition, and such wealth as war and Reconstruction left him, he was what has been called an aristocrat in the old-fashioned sense of that rather vague term, he steadfastly refused to join any Greek-letter fraternity, when asked by many, because he considered them as perhaps unintentionally tending to create or to promote artificial social discriminations. He was often called upon by less well-prepared students or some who had not enjoyed his advantages for help in their difficulties and he cheerfully responded. He maintained a high standard of personal conduct. He never drank, smoked, engaged in any form of dissipation or unseemly behavior. He seemed to have a will of iron. I never knew him to tell a risque anecdote or to utter a word beneath the highest standard of the strictest social good form. He loved his school-mates. I recall his determined protection of a delicate little freshman who ran to him for succor when tormented by hazers when he taught those boys such a lesson that it practically broke up that detestable practice that year.

I have sometimes thought that some spirits are too fine for a long life in the sort of a world we find ourselves in. Of course there are noble individuals who do survive; but there are also those whom a kind providence seems either to relieve of the torture of the conflict or whose work is ended early. It may have ben so with Pregram Dargan. I always regretted his leaving the college for Harvard, until I knew the splendid lovely lady whom he found there to gladden his brief remaining years. She has carried on her and his tradition with unfaltering fidelity. The privilege of neighborhood and friendship which I and my wife have enjoyed has enabled me to see that, whatever may be said about her political philosophy, Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan's championship of the poor and humble, of the oppressed and underprivileged, is of a piece with the fundamental quality of her husband's whole soul, which, like that of Abou Ben Adhem, "loved his fellow man."

S. P. VERNER.

Brevard, N. C.

her work often seems to be a mosaic rather than a whole. A novel must have unity of structure as well as unity of purpose. Further, the death rate in the novel is disturbingly and unnecessarily high. Miss Burke's portrayal of Bly and of Britt does not lead one to believe that they would have died as she says they did. The same with Ishma. Killing a character is a very dangerous thing for a novelist to do. Frequently it means that the novelist does not know what to do with him.

But these are all minor criticisms. Miss Burke is probably the most mature proletarian novelist in the United States today. She seems to have so many of the potentialities of a major artist that her next novel should prove a literary event of high significance.

CHARLES ANGOFF

Mature Proletarian Fiction

The Social Frontier April 1936

Stone Came Rolling, by FIELDING BURKE. *Longmans, Green and Company, New York.* 1935. $2.50.

IN THIS very able novel, Miss Burke largely fulfills the high promise of her earlier book, *Call Home the Heart*. She knows the South as few other fiction writers know it, certainly far better than Erskine Caldwell, and what she has to say about the people down there is extraordinarily mature, full-blooded, and delicately sympathetic.

The story of *A Stone Came Rolling* is simple enough. Dunmow is a typical Southern town—religious, impoverished, and desperate. One of the leading mill owners, Bly Emberson, is gifted with a considerable native intelligence and good-heartedness, but he is also cursed with Verna, his beautiful but preposterous wife. She is pious but sensuous, logical but stupid, and most aggravatingly solicitous about her family. The turmoil of the present-day world is the devil's hearsay to her. Naturally, she is a snob. Her soul is full of many petty but violent resentments—against her son, Martin, for being in love with Fairinda, daughter of Tom Jeff, a broken down farmer; against her daughter because she has married Bliss, a mere workér; and most of all, against her husband, Bly, because he sees a lot of sense and charm in Ishma, wife of Britt and an uncompromising radical. Ishma directs a strike in Dunmow, and Bly annoys Verna no end because he refuses to cut wages, as other manufacturers have done. In the end Bly commits suicide, Britt is killed by a reactionary hoodlum, and Ishma returns to her former home, where Miss Burke leaves her dying as the result of wounds suffered in a strike.

All of the characters are expertly handled, particularly Ishma, Verna, Bly, and Britt. The labor situations are even more competently portrayed. Miss Burke does not see the class struggle as a conflict between villains and angels, but between stupidity and selfishness, on the one hand, and desperation and hunger, on the other. The situation by which Ishma is confronted would paralyze a weaker spirit:

> In Dunmow it was not easy to feel the rising surge of life. . . . . There was nobility enough, and high desire. Enough to save the world surely, if that could do it, right here among the Dunmow workers. But it was wasted in prayers against an unanswering sky. A dead god left them moving self-isolated, self-destined, toward the abyss.

Ishma knows all this, but she manages to break through it and to lead a strike that fills the hearts of the town capitalists with fear. But she is not an automaton of the class struggle. She is also a woman, with all the immemorial longings of her sex. She confesses to her husband, Britt, that without his love she could not stand it all. She says to him:

> If I didn't have you, I couldn't keep up this life. I couldn't go out trying to do this and that little bit to make the world know what has happened to it, . . . go out with only my little lantern of conviction to hold against blind eyes, go stumbling and aching, and taking arrows into my flesh—I couldn't do it if I didn't have you to come to, . . . I'd go dead-cold without your heart to warm me.

The book, as has been pointed out, is a very able performance. Ishma comes out of it one of the most magnificent characters in contemporary American proletarian fiction. She is not raucous or mechanical, but warm and understanding. The volume's faults are largely the faults of Miss Burke's art as a whole . She writes very clearly and carefully, but she does not organize well. She jumps around too much, so that

Secrecy

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Inquirer

Philadelphia, Pa

DEC 1 1920

Secrecy

LONGMANS, Green have been thrown into all sorts of conference huddles over Laurence Stallings's news from the South that Fielding Burke, author of "Call Home the Heart," is Olive Tilford Dargan, the poet. Secrecy, we understand, was even written into the Fielding Burke contract and the contract is being lived up to.

Miss Dargan's poems, published several years ago by Scribner's, include "Highland Annals," "The Lute and Furrow," "The Cycle's Rim" and others.

4 o T. Dargan

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DEC 1 91925

An American Folk Dramatist of High Order

Reviewed by Phoebe H. Gilkyson

In the past year and a half well-established poets who have published volumes of fiction have set so high a standard that one is moved to recommend a preliminary course in poetry-writing to all novelists. Two essential qualities a poet puts into everything he writes: An aesthetic feeling for words, and a basic mysticism. But the novels of which we speak bear the unexpected merit of drama; a restrained but warm-blooded epic quality. Witness "Sard Harker," "The Interpreter's House," "Jennifer Lorn," "Porgy," and these "Highland Annals." (Charles Scribner's Sons), by Olive Tilford Dargan.

"Highland Annals" is not a novel. Its publishers call it a collection of sketches. But a single group of characters, a background of mountains in shifting sunlight and shadow, a sustained mood of tranquillity, courage and humor, make of the volume a distinct dramatic unit.

Mrs. Dargan was one of the first poets of the new South to gain recognition. But her affectionate and tactful work among the isolated farmers of the Carolina mountains, where for years she has made her home, have made her conspicuous, too, as a sociologist. She is guiltless of uplift in the meddlesome sense; she has lived and let live, respecting the traditions and fine Anglo-Saxon pride of these mountaineers. The expression, "poor white," is never implied or even felt. The homely drama of their lives, their canniness and generosity is sensitively and humorously drawn.

In the first group of sketches her lyric style verges upon excess; her obvious pleasure in the poetic phrase obscures the fine outline of composition. Ecstasy in high pastures and ancient [illegible] to over-sustained; it begins to [illegible] But gradually her narrative skill [illegible] Evvie and Serena take hold [illegible] as animate entities, and "A [illegible] Funeral," the deliciously matter-[illegible] account of a Don Juan of the [illegible], is a full-bodied epic in it-[illegible]. In this Mrs. Dargan becomes [illegible] than the recorder of an obscure [illegible] of American life. She is a folk-dramatist of high order.

Loose Item(s)

Editorial Page
Asheville Citizen

Mrs. Dargan's Poems

A Literary Event Here

By Charles A. Shull

The Spotted Hawk, by Olive Tilford Dargan. pp. xiii+128. John F. Blair, Winston-Salem. 1958. $3.

* * *

The appearance of a new volume of poems by Olive Tilford Dargan is an event of much significance to the literary interests of North Carolina and to the nation; for Mrs. Dargan belongs not to a region, but to the world. In 1922, "Lute and Furrow," established her as a competent poet of versatility and power. This new volume, I believe, will enhance her reputation as a poet of eminence, one who belongs to all ages.



Mrs. Olive T. Dargan

In her dedicatory poem, "The Shaken Bough," she offers the results of her labors, in hopes that critical readers may find at least one full round mellowed fruit worthy to be enjoyed before the winter fire. Having not merely sampled the fruit, but having read every poem in the volume more than once, I find so many pleasing poems that selection for special consideration becomes difficult.

* * *

As it should be, however, in every good volume, the very first poem deserves attention, and quotation:

GUEST ROOM

"I've guests tonight in my house,
My wee, my warm and dry house,
Where I take beggars in,
There's Love-too-much, and Cry-I-must,
There's Pray-for-me, and Die-I-must,
And little ragged Sin,
All snuggled up in my house
Like mice in a barley bin.
And it's fine to sit by my wee house door,
In cool twilight with milk and crust,
And my beggars all locked in."

This short poem is one of the best examples of "condensation" I have seen in a long time. It is very compact; but how much is said in a little space! We wish that every potential writer of poetry might profit by a study of its economy of words.

* * *

Another poem that I like very much is "Morning Window." This fine poem was written several years ago, and I believe it was my pleasure and privilege to give it, under another title, its first reading in public, on Oct. 15, 1955.

It occupies seven pages at the end of the first section of the book. It deals with a pair of cardinals, that, "crystaling suddenly / Out of the empty air" came to a feast of crumbs on her balcony. The contemplation of this pair of beautiful creatures provides the author with a theme that stirs the imagination . . . of how the birds, of reptile ancestry, learned to fly, without losing their earth; and how man, with his power to pierce the core of Nature's miracles, is now making the dream of traversing space on "mind-made wings" come true. Out of the despair over war and its horrors, the author wins back her world of hope and peace, thanks to the visitation observed through her "Morning Window."

* * *

The longest poem in the work, "Victory," occupies 18 pages. It is an epic of Major Walter Reed's struggle finally to conquer one of the most terrible diseases of man, yellow fever. She handles this difficult subject in masterly fashion; no one can read it without being deeply stirred.

In "Journey to Irenia" she expresses her longings for peace; and every one of the 47 poems has a real message. Her deep compassion for mankind is shown in her poems that concern war, disease, poverty, ignorance and death.

A study of her techniques shows that her work is rooted firmly and deeply in tradition; but it would be a mistake to overlook a strong modern trend. There is no slavish following of fixed forms; nor is her rhyming in any sense severely patterned. I like the free, swinging music of her cadences and when rhyme is missing one scarcely realizes it; for the stirring music is still there to charm and challenge one to read on and on. She lets lines run naturally, shorter or longer, as the theme races along, or slows down to majestic strides.

* * *

The entire volume has been selected with meticulous care. If one takes time to study her use of words, the impression becomes clear that the author is an adept at choosing the "exact word." Try replacing some of her words with synonyms, and see if you find a single one that would improve. I have tried it, but with no success. She has written a volume that should be widely owned and read. The poems are of a kind that one will want to read over and over, to extract the full flavor and meaning of her work.

Loose Item(s)

Pain and exhaustion for strings and pennies.
They cast from their backs
The old Adam of patience;
Resignation to savage history;
The phoenix ash repeating, repeating
~~The~~ season of weeping boughs;
The gory nations, magnified tribes,
Plotting, buying, selling, killing,
~~That they may plot and buy and sell and kill.~~

"She comes, and ~~a man does not give his life~~
For bread that ~~other men eat;~~
He does not build a house in the moon
And go unsheltered on earth;
He does not have a god in the clouds
And no deity on his path.

"Life that so often
Has lifted a shining head,
And gone back into clay,
With her hand in my bride's
Shall retreat no more.
For it is the Future I take to my breast;
She who will give me immortal heirs
That death can not assault,
Can not maneuver, flank or press
Into darkness."

Loose Item(s)

Merle rrice
R. l. Box 88
Forest City, N.C.

Merle Price
R. L. - Box [illegible]
Forest City

FOREST CITY
JAN 10
3 PM
1964
N. C.



Mrs. Olive T. Dargan

58 Balsam Avenue

Asheville, North Carolina

Loose Item(s)

Do not return to T.D.

A Mountain Farm a Poet's Parnassus

In Olive Tilford Dargan's Latest Book of Verse She Calls Forth the Spirit of Beauty in Woods and Streams

By William Stanley Braithwaite

THE usual information given on the jacket of a book about its contents is generally nothing more than a literary joke. The purpose of the "blurb" is to advertise what the reader is supposed to want, and not what the publisher often knows to be the truth. The claim made for the contents of Mrs. Dargan's book, by her publisher, is so admirably to the truthful point that I must quote it. I venture to say it was not done by the publicity man of the House of Scribner, but by some hand that has been familiarly touched with pure literature. "From lute to furrow," says this gem of publishing veracity, "is not an infrequent transition for Mrs. Dargan on the slopes of her mountain farm in North Carolina. Her fields and her study are rival claimants, and both her meditation and activities on her farm have furnished themes for the verse in this volume. The spirit of beauty, whether calling from the classics or from her mountain woods and streams, is equally alive to her sympathy and imagination. Still again she rises to those graver themes that vibrate with the deepest emotion and beat with the pulse of humanity itself."

These words hold the very essence of Mrs. Dargan's book, a book of lyrical song which comes to us so enrapturingly after a too long silence with the poet. Let me quote two stanzas from the opening poem "Lute and Furrow" to let Mrs. Dargan express her own moods in the substances of these pages:

What is this sudden gaiety that shakes the gayest boughs?
A voice is calling fieldward, 'tis time, to start the ploughs!
To set the furrows rolling while all the old crows nod,
And deep as life, the kernel; to cut the golden sod!
The pen, let nations have it,—we'll plough awhile for God.

Quite an unadorned verse in reality, but it is only a key, rather a seed, from which sprouts in the succeeding pages visions that take the color of their flames from the meditation of the earth, and the earth giving its symbolism to the web of human experience. There is the other mood of creation, when the heart of the poet is a furrow seeded with dreams sprouting in subtle and poignant rhyme.

The winter has grown so still
I can pause and pluck what I will
From the arms of Time as he goes.
All the poems with beauty half-hid,
Yet touching my haste like a rose,
May fall to me now if I bid.

The spirit of Beauty, yes, it saturates these pages, and it is through beauty's vision that Mrs. Dargan "rises to those graver themes that vibrate with the deepest emotion and beat with the pulse of humanity itself." I like nothing better in this extraordinary book for showing the dark moon-side of this poet's heart-mystery than the poem "Defiance." "Francesca" is a more beautiful poem, glinted with pure rays of tenderness; "To a Texas Primrose" is a Wordsworthian illumination of a natural object; "Sall's Gap" and "Released" are brief narratives flawless in finish and superbly rich in human substance; I named merely a few, but "Defiance" is a personal spirit taking on the flesh of words:

What is the wind-flower's nod to you
Whose Spring brings back no ghost?
What is the harebell's shaken blue,
Rocking again within my heart?
What are the tulip sails high-tost
Where suns depart?

You nothing see when Youth, the seer,
Dies proud against a wall;
Blind yet when eyes of friends long true
Meet in your shadow even there
Fill with a light undoing all
That you can do.

A sage speaks clear as bells that make
A gold lake of the air;
On heart and lips that dared, you set
The heavy earth; but waiting where
A world's two ways their parting take,
Men listen yet.

A poet walks; you haste to cut
The breath of flame and dew,
And doors of vision fumble shut;
But words of his, as bright as tears,
Have lit like birds on all the years
Time holds from you.

Who knows how lone the sea must flow,
Is lonelier than the sea;
A greater than the hills is he
Who feels them pass from sand to sand,
And who knows Death, to Death may go
With almoner's hand.

Or dear or great they fail as grass;
They go, and never come;
But still we seek out ways to pass
Beyond the tether of the breath,
And hope runs on from tomb to tomb
Denying death.

I want to quote right after this piece a verse called "The Poem," because in it Mrs. Dargan, going far afield to the locked symbolism of China, has brought back a secret which adorns "Defiance" with a visionary moral:

Li T'ai Po was making a poem about death,
When death moved through his life like a glacier
And ground away all his pretty words.
And ever after when a friend would come to him saying,
"I will read you my poem about death,"
Li T'ai Po would answer,
"I cannot hear you, friend; the North wind is too loud."

The "north wind" of human misery and injustice is often too loud for this poet to hear the music-poem of brotherhood and love in the world. One cannot read "The Sea asks" without feeling the white heat of passion against the selfishness and iniquity in man which permits one half the world to suffer from poverty and the other half to suffer at the same time from abundance.

Why do the ships rot?
Why have I nothing to do
When hunger kills in the East
And plenty kills in the West?

asks the singing question. Is the question unanswerable? No! Because the sea tells,

It is not long since my ships
Were a throng on my waters.
They were carrying bright youths
To slay and be slain.
I ceased to count them as they sped in the service of Death.
Why now are they still when Life would charter their wings?
Life that cries as a child,
That groans as a mother;
That shields a last spark on a million brows
While the death-frost gathers and the ships delay?

What is all this mystery that makes life so, its damning and provocative paradoxes?



Olive Tilford Dargan

A soul so highly keyed to the inequalities of human experience, Mrs. Dargan is not content to toy with the dangerous element of vision; she retreats from that terrible obligatory ideal of "setting the crooked straight," but the further she retreats the clearer becomes her visualization of the pitiable blindness of humanity. Upon this blindness she casts the radiance of beauty, thinking that it might pierce those beclouded eyes of passion and prejudice, and lead hope up a cleaner and more joyous pathway to the goal of love and brotherhood.

There is a strange but fascinating poem here by Mrs. Dargan, called "Pace Tua," which flashes to its end with these lines:

One day—Narrative, narrative!
Shall I slop into your easy path,
And trickle on?

You may drain any river
And find three garnets.

There's a garnet in this poem.
If you go after it with a dredge.

So there is a garnet of meaning in these poems for which the spirit of the reader must dredge, but his dredge must be an

nment of Beauty. This sonnet, "Ay," is a kind of submission of the rn by which the spirit must build h instrument wherewith the garnet- ews are dug from the obscurities of

h I have wandered in the dusty way
t farthest leads from beauty's path of cool;
pirit frayed, in suit of seamy day,
wit gone bare in cheap adventure's school;
wretched captive whom the gods enjoin
o store poor nothing with laborious breath;
ing my back with burden of a coin
hat will not toll me through the gate of death,
buy one dream to aid mortality
o stay the ravage of eternal dearth,
with one star array my memory
o shine an hour above the faded earth;
sink as one too weak for wish or cry,
lad of oblivion's shade before I die.

I cannot leave Mrs. Dargan's book without quoting from "To a Texas Primrose." The perfect simplicity of this poem is matchable with those symbolic emblems of nature which the magic of great poets has touched into immortality. The poet finds this humble flower obscured in its own habitat, and in these lines tells it how Herrick would have praised it into fame: but having Mrs. Dargan's praise no Herrick was needed:

Your robe, though royal from old time
Ere rose and daffodil,
Must, for the want of broidered rhyme,
Hirtle a gypsy still.

So shyly glowing, meekly gay,
And so for music meet,
I wonder what would happen, say,
If I were Herrick, sweet.

Sure he'd smuggle you somehow
In the Muses' hall,
Andproud court flowers there should bow
To a new queen lineal.

Withint and smile he'd fix your sound
Unestioned dynasty,
Send the happy whisper round,
Betty is pedigree.

Thalast line is the best tribute we can p Olive Tilford Dargan. In song Beauty s her pedigree, and its image is rising full view now that the pathway to Parnassus is no longer cluttered with the moy and rabble who thought it possiba make a tack hammer out of a flute.

Lute and Furrow. By Olive Tilford Dargan. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Loose Item(s)

And they

Chicago, Ill.

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PROPAGANDA? On page 47 of the Dec. 7 issue under the book review of Fielding Burke's new book is the statement that she belongs to no organization that is radical. If you have a copy of my book "The Red Network" you will see that she was a member of the Communist Party campaign committee of 1932. The basis of this statement is the revolutionary pamphlet issued by this Communist campaign group signed by her, which was entitled "Culture and the Crisis," and still sold at Communist Party bookstores for 5 cents. I wonder why you consider it necessary to give so much space to advertising Communist propaganda books.

ELIZABETH DILLING

Kenilworth, Ill.

Editorial Note: Miss Burke, a consistent partisan of the working classes, has repeatedly denied having Communistic affiliations. The fact that she signed a radical pamphlet is no evidence that she campaigned for, or even joined the party. Furthermore, her novel provides anything but "Communist propaganda": it not only fails to prescribe communism as the workers' panacea, but indicates sympathy for labor organizations which have consistently fought against it.

Pri
left.

Loose Item(s)

June 7, 1960

Soviet Radio Raps Praise Of Pasternak

LONDON (AP)—A Soviet radio commentator Wednesday night accused Boris Pasternak's Western admirers of showering "high-flown glorification" on the dead writer.

He also broke the official Soviet silence on the 1958 Nobel Prize awarded Pasternak after his prize winning novel "Dr. Zhivago" was published in the West.

Moscow radio had ignored any reference to the book since its author died two days ago and his passing had previously been noted only in an obscure Soviet literary paper.

Commentator Ivan Stepanov criticized the British Broadcasting Corp. for a too "facile pose" on Soviet events and for allowing commentator John Lawrence to get on the air.

"Speaking on the BBC," said Stepanov, "Lawrence alleged that Boris Pasternak's literary work was not understood in the Soviet Union.

"This assertion is false. The Soviet peoples' high literary judgment is internationally recognized and their appraisal of any particular book or a writer's work in general does not need to be corrected by the BBC or any other broadcasters of Western propaganda."

Stepanov repeated old Soviet charges that Pasternak's novel had drawn the Nobel Prize for purely political considerations.

"It is conceivable," he declared, "that the reasons why Boris Pasternak did not enjoy great sympathy in the Soviet Union was precisely because he deserved high-flown glorification from John Lawrence and his ilk."

Loose Item(s)

ASHEVILLE CITIZEN, ASHEVILLE, N.

MRS. DARGAN'S NEW NOVEL

Writing in the New York Times of Monday, John Chamberlain, book reviewer for that newspaper, devotes his entire column to "A Stone Came Rolling," the new novel by "Fielding Burke," the pen name of Mrs. Clive Tilford Dargan, of West Asheville.

"What distinguishes 'A Stone Came Rolling' from lesser strike novels," says Mr. Chamberlain, in a review which is highly appreciative throughout, "is its understanding of the conflicting motives ot a whole community. Fielding Burke—or Olive Tilford Dargan, as she used to be known when she wrote lyric poetry for the quality magazines—does not divide her people into sheep and goats; she takes them in all their inevitable graduations.

"Religion, jealousy, personal hatreds and curiosity all play their conditioning roles in a novel whose dramatic axis is the conflict of capital and labor in a region that has lagged behind the rest of the country in unionization and in the granting or wresting of social services through factory legislation."

Remarking that the people in "A Stone Came Rolling" are the same sort of people that appear in Ellen Glasgow's "Vein of Iron," Mr. Chamberlain thinks that "a quarrel is certain to rage over the respective merits of Miss Burke's approach and Miss Glasgow's." His own view is that "Miss Burke's sense of the issues involved is probably clearer than Miss Glasgow's," yet he adds that "each novel impresses one with its truth," closing with the suggestion that "if a reader will take 'Vein of Iron' and 'A Stone Came Rolling' as complementary, he will be making the first step toward understanding the bewildering complexity of the American scene."

Loose Item(s)

JULIA ELLSWORTH FORD
31 FREMONT PLACE
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.
TEL: WHITNEY 7780

March 7th, 1942

My dear Ellsworth,

My case seems to be more clearly understood by now. About two weeks ago, Gene became very anxious about my condition. I was seriously ill, and for causes that were not bring discovered by Dr.White, although he admitted their presence. He said he would be glad to call in some man for consultation. It seemed the wisest thing for me to call on the help of some other methods that had proven valuable in the past, one being the Drowh test, which is a test of the rates of vibration of every organ. I had this test three years ago, and the new test last week seemed to reveal the same condition, only slightly more serious because of the X Ray shock.

In the light of these tests, Dr.White is going to try and build up my system, so that I may be less toxic, and thus remove danger of further facial inflamation. For three weeks my face was flaming red

Loose Item(s)

and itching- evidently caused by an increased ailing of my kidneys etc. An ice bag relieved it some, and then suddenly I bethought me of Dr.Tenner's face lotion-- I can't see why I did not think of it before-- and immediately it relieved me, so on Sunday I went to Malibu with Corti and Vorhees and Pauline, and Kurt gave us a delicious dinner at noon. Then I left them at the theatre, and took them to Sierra Madre on Monday. I can now report I am much better and stronger. At first I looked like a boiled lobster, and after the Tenner lotion I peeled until I looked like a scaly fish. Seems as if I had everything but measles! It's <u>good</u> to get out again and not collapse. I think I can begin to paint.

What an awful war this is! They're certainly trying to kill off this generation. Some job trying to send soldiers to <u>every country</u>!!! Now that women wear pants, they'll probably send them next. It will be a lovely nation of old men and women. And it's outrageous that our men don't know where they're being sent-- whether to an Iceberg country or the Tropics. And human beings are supposed to like it, and if they don't, let them go hang! I suppose if I wore pants, I'd be shot.

Loose Item(s)

So now although we owe deep thanks to Russia, she wants us to send our American boys to help her so she can hold on to what they win for her. No wonder this fool, Government is losing in the war game-calling on all the youths to fight in nearly every country-- England, Ireland, the Phillipines, Alaska, Honolulu, Australia, etc.etc. If a family have three sons, they take them all, and leave the parents often without support- "for the sake of sacrifice and saving the country" If they have four, they take four. One family here owning a large ranch have six sons. They employed and supported many people around them. Now all the sons have been taken and the old mother can't take charge of the ranch. Leon's mother has four sons, all taken. The Government ought to leave one at home.

Dear Roosevelt says "I had to let Japan have oil etc. until the people are back of me" Why couldn't he have said "My people, do you realize that Japan says she is not at war with China, only trying to help her. Unfortunately the Tanaka Memorial was discovered where she says 'When we take over China, we will fight America'. In view of this, Americans, do you want to send oil to Japan?"

This is a copy of a letter I sent to Hobart, and I am sending it to you because I don't want to repeat the report about my health.

Will you please show it to Consuelo & send to Olive

With love,

Devotedly

Mother

Darzan I

Can't write so many letters

I haven't the strength

CHARMED CIRCLE

Andrew Hewitt, Editor.

This department awards a prize of $2.50 each week for the poem adjudged best by the editor. No manuscripts are returned without a self-addressed stamped envelope.

NOW is winter and now is sorrow,
No roses, but only thorns today;
Thorns will put on roses tomorrow,
Winter and sorrow scudding away;—
No more winter and no more sorrow,
To-morrow.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

THE ROADS.
(Model Poem.)

THE roads change and none there are who remember
The old ways of their going; none there are
Whose minds flung travel over trackless miles,
Whose hands broke boughs to mark the march of roads
Into a country they had never known.
The roads change and are gone and again are earth,
Green with her everlastingness and men
Who built their breath into each aching mile,
Whose bodies swung above the shattering rock,
Their backs sweat-gleaming and their shoulders curved
To that day's toil—they too again are earth—
The thing they were, one with the thing they made,
Turned under by the patient plow of time.
The roads change and none there are who remember;
And they who built them have become as moonlight
Over a vanished land—and their labor vanished!

SARAH LITSEY, in Scribner's Magazine.

RED BIRD IN THE SNOW.
(Prize Poem.)

MY small window framed it,—
A sight that was too
Enchanting for any
Mere mortal to view!

Quick flashing of scarlet,
Soft rushing of wings,
Bright stain on the whiteness:
A creature that sings!

A crumb was a bounty.
He flung back his head,
Gemmy notes sparkled forth
Strung on a silk thread.

Ah! the snow was enough
As it gathered the city
Under pinions of down
As in love or in pity;

But here was a joy
Too amazing to tell:
Red bird in the snow
With a note like a bell!

ZOE KINCAID BROCKMAN, North Carolina.

ON SOME FAR FIELD.

NOW we who feel so strangely gratified
Touching the weed for flower, the rock for soil
Move with a languor though the winds deride,
Are far removed from all this bright turmoil.
As at its crumbling height, the crag conforms
And is worn to a slender pinnacle
By day-long gales that writhe, and crashing storms,
We are bowed down; we seek no miracle.
We will accept the least; our richest plunder
Is not more worthy than a chaff of grain,
We turn deaf ears to gunfire and to thunder;
We walk apart, insensible to pain.

But we must leave for one our little yield:
His eyes trust joy that burns on some far field.

RICHARD LEON SPAIN,
Arkansas.

STRANGER.

I SAW her pass, a slender shape
In rosy frock and blowing cape.
Upon her face was such a glow
Of joy, I wished that I might know
What was her secret keen delight.
Perhaps it was the sudden sight
Of some lost friend; or high desire
Fulfilled, to which great souls aspire;
Or lovers' meeting, sweet and wild;
Perhaps the promise of a child.
I could not guess. I had no clue.
And yet I often wish I knew.

MARGARET ASHMUN,
Wisconsin.

INTIMACY.

YOU would be angry
Did you know that a tone of your voice
Singing, alone in the garden of young maidenhair trees and opopanax,
Beats on my breast
Like the throb of your heart on my own.

BEATRICE RAVENEL,
South Carolina.

Southern Poets

OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN.
By Helen Harriet Sails.

MRS. OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN (Fielding Burke) of West Asheville is poet, playwright and fiction writer. She has written three books of lyrics, 10 or 12 plays, a book of short stories, and two novels. Her second novel, A STONE CAME ROLLING, is just off the press of Longmans, Green and Company. Primarily, however, Mrs. Dargan is a poet. Her plays are largely in impassioned verse, and her novels show the poet's fire as well as the poet's sensitiveness to beauty and to pain. The cadences of the heart beat through her prose into her readers' hearts.

Her three books of lyrics came after her three books of plays and before her three books of prose fiction. Familiarity with these poems is bound to give a keener edge to appreciation of A STONE CAME ROLLING. Mrs. Dargan's earliest volume of non-dramatic verse was PATHFLOWER AND OTHER POEMS, first published in 1914, in England. The second was THE CYCLE'S RIM, published in 1916, and the third was LUTE AND FURROW, published in 1922. The title-poem in PATHFLOWER is a ballad, a tiny story that flicks one like a swift cherub's wing. THE CYCLE'S RIM is a sonnet sequence, dedicated to "One Drowned at Sea." From the time the poet lays her "leaf of laurel on the waves" that lock down his body, "jewel of the sea," until the end of the cycle in Sonnet LIII, we are held in sympathy with the singer whose grief can no more discrown her than death can "discrown" her "lordliest love." Though she declares herself "poor in shining words," we find her affluent. Here, for example, is the immaculate rapture of young love:

"Gold bounty from the sun I shall not need;
My radiance then the needy sun shall feed."

Here is love's answer to its own mystery: "Love knows them not, who knows the why of loving." And here is love in sorrow chanting:

"O, what a lover must thou be, old Time,
With so much beauty to thy bosom folded!"

The Southern Society of New York recognized THE CYCLE'S RIM as the best book of the year by a Southern writer.

The central idea in the title-poem of LUTE AND FURROW is in this line: "They tread immortal measure who make a mellow field!" Mrs. Dargan sets a Dickensian value on honest and cheerful labor, and is passionately unreconciled to the misery of those who labor in darkness. As in her novels, so in her poems—notably "In the Black Country" and "Evvie's Mother,"—she shows her pity for all who are sullied or broken by unhappy social conditions. But LUTE AND FURROW is neither a lachrymose nor a scowling book. The poet has heard the music in the sod as well as on the mountain top. In "Released," for example, the wilted little mother becomes "Deborah singing." In the exquisite elegiac poem, "Francesca," grief is touched with exaltation that "one like her may make dust sing." The reader of "Defiance" is lifted to those spiritual uplands whence Death is seen as a blind and puny force in comparison with bright Immortality.

The blue uplands of North Carolina have doubtless been a major source of inspiration to Mrs. Dargan. How she loves them in "Twilight:"

"The mountains lie in curves so tender
I want to lay my arm about them
As God does."

The Indian woman in "Sall's Gap" loved them above her own life. "I take a Walk" reveals a rare bewitchment of mind and heart by Nature. "En Route" is a magnificent treatment of man's spiritual evolution.

Thought and phrase and feeling have the verve and audacity that are found not seldom in Mrs. Dargan's verse. She does not blow a trumpet to call attention to herself, but she speaks with companionable, though often challenging directness, of the things that mean most to her. In the words of Emily Dickinson, she "distills amazing sense from ordinary meanings." Is not that the essential virtue of the artist? The poet, along with Caesar, may exclaim: "I saw; I conquered." Those who know LUTE AND FURROW will hear their friend's voice still in A STONE CAME ROLLING, and those who know only the novelist will do well to seek a speedy introduction to Olive Tilford Dargan, clear-toned singer of the uplands.

Loose Item(s)

‹DOT›

Bluebonnet Lodge,
West Asheville, N. C.
July 9th, 1936

Granville Hicks, Esq.,
New York City.

Dear Comrade Hicks:

I am very late in telling you of my gratitude for your review of "A Stone Came Rolling." But there were reasons.

Your article is a fine summary of my intentions and their limited realization. I have considerable trekking ~~about~~ before me - Arkansas, Alabama, Tennessee - but I hope that before I complete another novel I shall be able to read a number of ~~the better~~ revolutionary books written in more modern style ~~than mine~~. I'm afraid that I had ~~no~~ thought of style when producing my two ~~novels~~. I was concerned with putting across a human record according to my feelings, judgment, and hope for mankind, and I was naive enough in my groping to think that I was practically alone. But no sooner was my first book out than I learned of dozens popping up all over the country. I ought to have read them before writing my second. But when life is crammed, reading gets left out. I've just received a note from Harry Elmer Barnes about "Stone Rolling" in which he says, "Not since 'Jack Conroy's 'Disinherited' have I read a book on the labor scene that so deeply impressed me." Now I must

Loose Item(s)

read 'Disinherited.' And already I am reading "The Great Tradition" with profit and delight. It makes me wish that if you get to my part of the South you will let me know.

Thanks untold for dealing so kindly with my novel. I assure you that I will give you a better third book, or nothing.

Cordially yours,

Fieldings Burke

Loose Item(s)

COMMENTS ON A STONY CAST ROLLING

I have just finished the Big Journal and I read as intently as if it had happened instead of being imagined. ...The style is wonderful. A poignant, beautiful and enthralling story. It made clear much that I hadn't known. I wish I could do something to boost its circulation.

Edward A. Ross
(University of Wisconsin)

I was brought up in Vermont and the difference from the South is very great, yet I recognized the authentic quality of the America I used to know as I haven't in any other novel. And it is the only story I have ever read that had any sense of the religious background. ...In showing how it is the "opium of the people" and yet showing how it comes out of the people themselves you have done a wonderful thing.

John Dewy

A book like yours gives me a new hope for the South. I salute your gifts as a writer, but beyond this I salute your courage and all-embracing humanity, for out of these three comes the real literature of the world.

J. E. Spingarn

By no means free of faults, but the most inspiring book I have read this year. And that is because it shares the supreme quality of the greatest literature; a confidence that the agony of humanity is not futile and that man can eventually achieve his own salvation.

Grant C. Knight
(University of Kentucky)

Loose Item(s)

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THE NEWS PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK



MRS. OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN

By DORCAS CARLAND

"Will you loan me a cup of [illegible] Mrs. Dargan, please?" [illegible] neighbor coming into the kitchen before breakfast. "I haven't been able to leave Tommy long enough to get me some."

While Mrs. Dargan cut and buttered she asked how Tommy was that morning and threw in an orange for him. She didn't tell me, but I learned later that she had sat up most of the night with Tommy when he was sickest.

That, I learned, was how she spends much of her time, being a good neighbor to those who need her. Mrs. Dargan stays and works most of the time in her charming log cabin home in West Asheville and occasionally frequents the summit of Spivey Mountain for inspiration.

Sometimes, she manages to squeeze in a few minutes or even weeks to write a book, but not enough to satisfy the thousands who have read and loved her work. "You seem able to write anything you care to write," wrote Scribners, her publisher, "Why do you stand on the sill of the Pantheon? A little more application and you will be on the inside with the immortals." But she is willing to pass up even that boon in order to feed the hungry, counsel the doubtful, help the innocent get out of jail, or nurse the sick.

Immortal she is, however, on the strength of even one book, but her readers often feel that they need her just as much as her neighbors can. They need her vision, when the world is swirling so fast that it seems to have lost direction. They can lean on her perception, which seems to be based on the eternal verities and pierces the clouds of dust that all but engulf them. She is contemporary, up to the minute, and even looking into the future, but the understanding that illuminates her work, is of the ages and ageless.

Mrs. Dargan, to her neighbors, was born Olive Tilford, daughter of a father "Who was always suspecting that Eldorado lay over the next border." They moved first from her birthplace in Kentucky, to Missouri. "Both parents, teachers and civic minded" began building a high school in that state, but her mother's health failed, and "the family crossed the Arkansas line into the Ozark foothills, where they found high and healthful ground, but did not save the mother's life." Here Professor Tilford founded a prosperous academy, with precocious Olive, then thirteen, as an as-

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Loose Item(s)