

# THE CRIME CLUB CONFESSES

For months now we've been trying to get this fellow H. C. Bailey to do a whole novel on Reggie Fortune, that incomparable special advisor to Scotland Yard. Hitherto he has given us only short stories of Reggie's de-

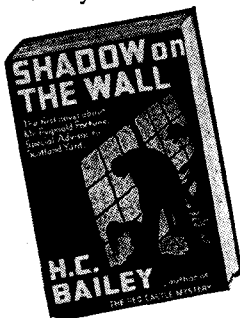


H. C. BAILEY

... creator of Mr. Reginald Fortune

tective adventures, yet so excellent have they been that Alexander Woollcott, among others, has remarked that Mr. Bailey writes better than any of his contemporaries, and Walter D. Edmonds (author of *Mostly Canallers*) has said that the stories rank with the very best of Sherlock Holmes.

And now we're delighted because Mr. Bailey has given us the book we've asked for so eagerly, the first long novel about Mr. Reginald Fortune. You will love it! It's a dangerous, absorbing case that begins with a garden party at Buckingham Palace and brings Reggie face to face with a charming murderer whom only the special Fortune courage and ingenuity can destroy.



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See Personals this issue for full description

## The PHOENIX NEST

By WILLIAM ROSE BENET

### ROUND ABOUT PARNASSUS

BEFORE going away to the mountains for the summer (whence, however, I shall continue to send back material for this column), I wish to run through the books of poetry on my shelves, and dispose of most of them. First and foremost, that indefatigable Henry Harrison, poetry publisher at 430 Sixth Avenue (new address), has contributed a quota of four books as yet unreviewed by me. "Ohio Poets," with a foreword by George Elliston, is one of those state anthologies which, though it contains poets as good as Marie Gilchrist and Dorothy Reid, also masses together so much negligible matter that it is a weariness to the flesh. Then there is the first prose book by Lucia Trent and Ralph Cheyney, "More Power to Poets!" In so far as they say there should be more poetry in life I agree with them suspiciously; but when they say there should be more life in poetry, I emit a warwhoop of assent. The trouble is, there's so little life in most of the poetry I scan. And I fear that not only Miss Trent and Mr. Cheyney, but Mr. Harrison too, have been instrumental in getting published a terrible lot of mediocre verse—with the best intentions, let us admit, but O the difference to me! "Veiled Eros," by Archibald Rutledge, also comes from Henry Harrison, and "Shelter of Song," by Elizabeth Voss. Alas!

The following I do not think it necessary to comment further upon than to mention their titles: "Sea Level," by Sylvia H. Bliss, "Cornell College Book of Verse," "Back to the Nameless One: Biosophical Poems," by Frederick Kettner, "Morning Glories and Moonflowers," by Harriet Olds Henderson, "Singing Rails," by J. Francis Concidine, "Slightly Sour Grapes," by Evelyn Love Cooper, "Six of One," compiled by Joseph Joel Keith, "Seeds of Earth," by Eleanor Allen, "With Lips of Rue," by LeGarde S. Doughty, "Harp Strings," by Isabel Tracy Gaily, "Fog Phantoms and Other Poems," by Alice Adkins, "Prolegomena," by Aeron Tani Rosen, "Wings on the Hilltop," by Marguerite George, "The Dead Lie Down," by Walter R. Adams, "daekargus," by William Fitzgerald, "Undertones," by Marie Margaret Winthrop, "Feisal the Arabian," "Lady Ilaria and Other Poems," by Lucy Munson Taylor, "Glory of Earth," by Anderson M. Scruggs, and "Shadows of Dawn," by Pearl Moore Stevens.

In a slightly superior category, Ellen Glines, in "Garden Untended" (Mosher), deters me for a moment by exclaiming

I have circled the earth  
On a desperate quest;  
I must find where the Phoenix  
Is building his nest.

Well, Miss Glines, he is building it right here, and is sorry he cannot give your little book a higher place in this week's ranking. James H. Cousins's second selection of his poetry, "A Bardic Pilgrimage," has intelligence and learning in it; yet somehow Cousins is one of those Celtic poets who just does not impress me strongly enough. I prefer Irene Haugh's "The Valley of the Bells," with an introduction by "A. E." It is one of the books I am taking away with me to review. While of peculiar and tragic interest, I do not think that "Poetry of the Insane," compiled by Dr. Charles E. Mayos, need be reviewed here. A book with some charm is Stella Gibbons's "The Priestess" (Longmans); for example that poem, "The Foal;" but Miss Gibbons's ideas are pretty stereotyped. "Listings-In," a Poem-Sequence by W. G. Hole, is built upon the "Spoon River" plan, but immeasurably inferior to it, a book of such flat and uninspired traditional verse as is all too prevalent in England. "Rhapsody with Humanity," by Joachim Aviron, is the utterance of one believed to be a prophet. "The Chase," by Harvey C. Grumbine (Boston: Bruce Humphries), is one of "The Friendly Books" (pocket-size) that I can recommend, a selection of interesting sonnets. "The Indian and His River" is a book of Iroquois Indian songs and legends, also concerning the river Genesee, fairly well done by Carleton Burke. "Thirteen Sonnets of Georgia," by Daniel Whitehead Hickey, seems rather too local to recommend to the general reader. "Out of Peony and Blade," by Antoinette Scudder, is one of Henry Harrison's better books (see his address earlier in this article). In spite of

the horrible pink paper upon which they are printed, Miss Scudder's Oriental narratives are worth reading, and I may have something further to say about them.

I am taking away with me Alexander Laing's "Wine and Physic," Wyndham Lewis's "One-Way Song," "The Singing Heart," by the late Clinton Scollard, "Scherzo from a Proud City," by Ramon Guthrie, "Unheard Melodies," by Lord Gorell, and a few other volumes, salvaged from the many. You may expect to hear about these later on.

Though the *Phoenix Nest* will now be removed to New Hampshire, I hope to get enough eggs to fill it every week of the summer. Mine will be a working vacation, and the most pleasurable part of the work will be to retail to you whatever "great thoughts" concerning poetry occur to me in those altitudes!

### Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

The news of the week is the resignation of Dan Longwell and Malcolm Johnson from Doubleday. Mr. Longwell will join the editorial staff of *Time* and *Fortune*; Mr. Johnson becomes an assistant editor of *Fortune*. Dan Longwell has been connected with the Doubleday organization for fifteen years; during the last ten or so he has had charge of promotion, in addition to considerable manufacturing and editorial work. He has probably had his fingers on as many best sellers in that time as any publisher. Malcolm Johnson, formerly with the Standard Oil Co. in China and once managing editor of the *Youth's Companion*, has been assistant editor in the book department of Doubleday Doran since 1929, in charge of the Crime Club particularly.

The first office-workers' strike in the publishing business, which occupied most of last week at the Macaulay Company, seems to have gone smoothly for the strikers. It was good weather for picketing, and the picketers managed to get two free rides in the Black Maria, with a minimum of inconvenience at the police station; not to mention several columns of newspaper space. Prominent picketers included Malcolm Cowley of *The New Republic* and "Exile's Return," Michael Gold, Albert Halper, Tess Slesinger, and Isidor Schneider of the Macaulay Company. Dashiell Hammett was one of the first picketers, and a signer of the telegram sent to the NRA. The strike was settled on Friday with recognition for the Office Workers' Union, but without having stirred up much overt activity in other publishing houses. The effort to unionize the office employees in the publishing business seems, at this stage, somewhat anomalous. There is no doubt a fairly high percentage of employees with intellectual sympathies for any union activity, also with the ability to stir up comment. But publishing is a business in which the officers are usually recruited from the ranks; one which generally gets along without time clocks or other paraphernalia of the factory system. Nobody has raised a question as to the right of the publishing employees to organize; the question is whether they stand to gain or lose.

Few of the "commercial" publishers get out catalogues or bulletins anywhere near as interesting as the university presses: for instance the Spring Books pamphlet of the Columbia University Press (2960 Broadway) convinces Quercus that one ideal book for vacation reading is Sir Thomas Browne's *Hydriotaphia, Urne-Buriall . . . the Sepulchral Urnes . . . the Quincuncial Plantations . . . Mystically Considered*. A delightful edition in the Facsimile Text Series available for only \$1. Sheed & Ward, those alert Catholic publishers at 63 Fifth Avenue, always have something interesting to say in their pamphlets: they are pleased by the remark of an English critic who says they "have resolutely refused to seek petty safety by relying on the sale of catechisms, prayer books and manuals of devotions . . . they have taken the brilliant and bright world by the scruff of the neck." Speaking of the Columbia University Press, some of the best publicity we get is *The Pleasures of Publishing*, a weekly preparation by Ed Noyes of that establishment. A recent issue quoted John Lane of The Bodley Head to the effect that

English publishers do practically all their business through bookstores, only a negligible amount at retail. Forty per cent of the business of the Columbia University Press, he goes on to inform us, is done with individuals. Probably the most extensive individual business of recent years has been done by Doubleday with the pamphlet *Arms and the Men*, a reprint of the *Fortune* article on the armament industry. So far 50,000 copies have been sold at 10 cents each, all direct to readers.

Old Quercus always feels 99.44% pure when he gets the annual invitation to the Exhibition of "Small Sculptures in White Soap." Nothing to get all lathered up about, but it's amusing; held this year on the 62nd floor of the R. C. A. Building, until June 30. Speaking of high places, now they have a bar in the Empire State Building observatory they really should serve up there that cocktail called the Swiss Family Manhattan. The recipe can only be had from the inventor, c/o Quercus. Peter Greig, the wine fancier, tells us that the vintages served at the speakers' table at the Birthday Dinner for Thomas Mann were *Dry Graves* 1926 and *Grand Puy Lacoste* 1924. What an excellent apothegm from O. W. Holmes was that quoted by Dean Kimball (College of Engineering, Cornell) in the 25th anniversary booklet of the McGraw-Hill Company. Holmes said, "Society is a strong solution of books. It draws the virtue out of what is best in reading as hot water draws the strength of tea leaves." The employees of Doubleday, Doran & Company plan to unveil a tablet in memory of the late well-loved Frank Nelson Doubleday ("Effendi") on June 14 at the Country Life Press.



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