

# the Phoenix Nest

## FORBIDDEN FLUTES

(For the imprisoned Spanish children)

THE night extracts the flavor of flutes  
For moon's food.  
For this the curious blue shaft,  
Down into the black barracks,  
Lighting the ghost and wondering eyes  
In the caves of the white child faces.  
Like this they lie, child by child  
Beside another and another child,  
As though the strewn weak years  
And innocent absence of their strength  
Locked in the dark—had come to bloom,  
Sunless, without the seed.

The white spears of the shafted moon  
Abstract the walls.  
Looks the moon on the small hands  
The blue lace of threaded fingers  
As child touches child.  
Their child throats awake in endless  
Quaver, tenderly,  
The flute song as of weaving of seas,  
The flavor and bloom of the night  
flowers,  
The tenor of tenderly calling bells  
Afar to the free.

In this assembly of small bones  
With thin flesh, the nest of lost  
And luminous eyes, grave as if  
The trusting smile had always turned  
A little off,  
Endures the breathing of a country's  
deep  
Heart, the future in a stone keep,  
Like song of the chosen from the  
oaken ark,  
Kept for coming love, for coming  
laughter,  
For skipping up and down  
And water-running talk  
And making, making greatness with  
adult hands.

Though now their silent sorrows and  
rare  
Discovered smiles and tears are  
trapped  
By long flood that covers corruption,  
Their hearts are fore-ordained to  
victory.  
Forbidden flutes, insistent voices,  
Follow up the blue shaft  
To the velvet height of night  
To find where life  
Flies by on wheels, with rapt  
Peddling like a bicycle  
Down the fond winged hills.  
Their little blue hands touch strongly  
As their hearts gather up  
A new-constructed world, formed  
On the first day of the first month  
When the face of the ground was dry.  
PETER JOHN STEPHENS.  
\* \* \*

## IN THE PARK

Pale and secret as a bird's-egg  
Is the lake in the park,  
Left by nursemaids and children  
In the path of the stumbling dark.

Slipping ahead of the darkness,  
Pungent with vapors of spring,  
Fog hastens to hide the lake  
With a dripping, smoke-blue wing.  
FLORENCE LONSFORD.  
\* \* \*

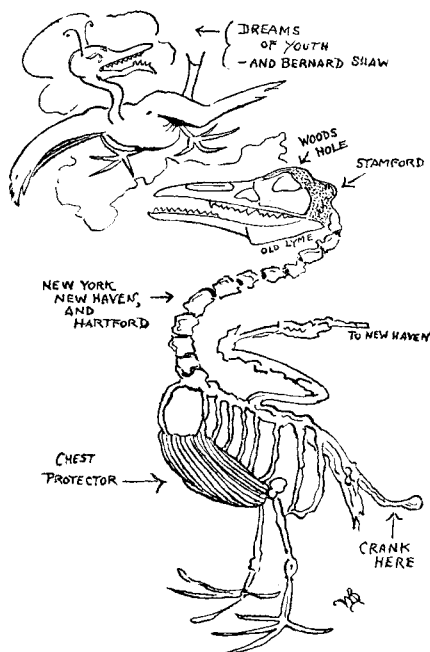
Henry Seidel Canby writes me as follows:

"Phra the Phoenician" is about the best book in English in pseudo-archeology, which is usually so much better written than the genuine article. I have known it since youth, and it ought to be revived. If any publisher will reprint it, I'll write a preface in collaboration with you or Earle Walbridge or any other intelligent spirit, and we'll bow in the public to a good time.

I hereby turn over my possible share of that preface to Earle, as he is much better qualified to speak for Phra than I; and I certainly hope a publisher takes Dr. Canby up! He can always be reached at the SRL.

Speaking of Earle, I asked him for some information concerning a book from the past that I had been reading, "Mr. Kello," by Ian Ferguson (my copy, D. Appleton & Company, 1925). He responded as follows:

Ian Ferguson (August 2, 1885—September 16, 1935) was the son of Ian Maclaren, author of "Beside the Bonnie Bush." His real name was Frederick Watson (his father was the Rev. John Watson, D.D.), educated at Sedbergh, Emmanuel College (Cambridge) and Edinburgh University. Founder and editor of *The Cripple*, an international quarterly devoted to the cause of crippled children. Joint master (with Mrs. Watson) of the Tanatside Hunt. Wrote a lot of other books, including "Robert Smith Surtees" and "The Philosophy of Witchcraft." [This I also have—W. R. B.] But why didn't he list "Mr. Kello as a witchcraft book in "Who's Who?" [It is one of the best books on witchcraft in Scotland I have ever read—W. R. B.] William Roughhead praised him highly, in the course of an es-



—Drawing by William Rose Benét.

say which went all out on the subject of Joseph Shearing—and wrote an introduction to a new edition of "Mr. Kello," published in 1931. Mr. Kello was an actual person and parson.

Yes, the flyleaf of the book contains this brief sentence: "1570 Oct. 4. Mr. John Kello, minister of Spot, hangit in Edinb."—*Lamont's Diary*.

The above suggests to Earle that the Scotch are indeed mysterious, and he continues:

My custodianship at St. Blank's ended last night for the fall, winter and spring, on as macabre a note as it began. The angel from Revelations gave us a clean bill of health at the first visit and made no more apparitions. But last night some flustered women came in and asked whether I knew anything about the note posted on the door of the Bride's Room, of which the key has been missing several days. I attributed it to an outside undertaker, but well I knew 'twas the work of our own Mr. Alexander ("Sandy"), the night watchman. As I told you last year, he was born in Kirriemuir and knew Margaret Ogilvy, and used to sit in an Auld Lichts kirk in the pew behind Jimmy Barrie. Also that he had a neighbor at Glamis ("Gloms"), one Lizzie Bowes-Lyon, who came from a puir family but did verra weel by hersel (and the family) by marrying the future King of England.

Perhaps I should explain that the day staff consists of Mary, a temperamental old R. C., a privileged character; and William, an English ex-butler. The note read:

To all the physical and mental cripples and Irish, who work daytime

Leave the key of this room on the nail, how the Hades can we put a unprocessed body in this room in the middle of the night if we have no key.

Irish—Dumb cerebellum  
English—Petrified cerebellum  
Scottish—Perfect, Peerless, in fact, O. K.  
\* \* \*

## CREATURES FOR CROSS WORDS

CRETACEOUS—GOOD GRACIOUS!

Oh very different from when it was born is

All that remains of the Ichthyornis.  
The best-known species of this toothed bird

Was the size of a gull—or so I've heard.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

## SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 606)

SYLVIA LYND:

(THE) COMPLEAT ANGLER  
(To A. R.)

Who would catch trout, himself a trout must be,  
Must know the stream and all its tracery;

Its morning silver and its evening green;

Its tangled rapids and its smooth pool where

In sunny noons the naiad plaits her hair.

## PERSONALS

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(Continued from page 88)

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