

The Meaning of Scientific Results

FORWARD WITH SCIENCE. By Roger D. Rusk. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1943. 306 pp., and index. \$3.50.

Reviewed by WALDEMAR KAEMPFERT

ONCE upon a time the atom was a hard little ball—the smallest conceivable, indivisible unit of matter. Now it is far more complicated than the solar system, with electrons revolving around a nucleus and leaping from orbit to orbit without any regard for time and space. A universe which was once a smoothly running machine has become a problem in higher geometry. Matter and energy, once wholly separate, are now one and the same. To explain the new concepts popularly is very much like trying to tell an Eskimo in words how the music of the Star Spangled Banner sounds. There is only one way to understand music, and that is to drink it in through the ear; there is only one way to understand physics, and that is to grasp the equations which inform us that space is curved and matter very empty.

The best that can be done for the ordinary reader is to present the results of experimental investigation and to explain the meaning of the results. This Professor Rusk does as skilfully as simple words permit. And so he discusses relativity, the structure of the atom, the cosmic rays, the constitution of the stars, radioactivity,

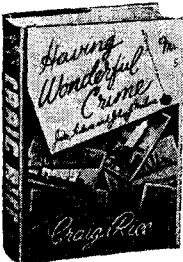
atomic energy, and other matters in a way that will make its appeal to readers who want their information in palatable doses.

Like many of the younger professors Dr. Rusk has no sympathy with the old-fashioned view that the scientist is not concerned with the social effect of his discoveries. But the discussion of what is called the "impact of science on society" is manifestly not that of a professional sociologist. The emphasis is too heavy on the outward changes wrought by inventions and too little on the change in human outlook and on the relation of science to capitalism and democracy and to the environment. Both scientists and theologians will question the statement that "science and religion can no longer be kept in . . . separate compartments." Conflict has arisen because the church once tried to bring them together. Now it is recognized that it is the business of scientists to explain how the universe is constructed and that of the artist, the mystic, and the priest to clothe the structure with purpose and meaning. When religion and science are thus considered there is every reason for keeping the two apart. These excursions into the philosophy of science detract not one whit from a first-rate book which ought to satisfy the curiosity of many readers who are puzzled by the exploits of atom-smashers and the creators of universes that expand and contract like bubbles.



CRAIG RICE's latest mystery, *Having Wonderful Crime*, has just been published. On the theory that there are still a few people (those who have just learned to read, say) who need further elucidation:

Having Wonderful Crime shows CRAIG RICE's famous trio—Jake Justus, his beauteous wife Helene, and criminal lawyer John J. Malone—on a New York vacation. Their impact on Manhattan is terrific. The highlights are, briefly: a decapitated bride who sends cheery postcards from Niagara Falls; a not-so-kosher escort bureau; a disappearing bridegroom with an inexplicable yen for the Staten Island ferry; and a model who goes in for censorable correspondence.



CRAIG RICE aficionados will realize, of course, that the above inventory merely skims the surface of *Having Wonderful Crime*. It makes no attempt to describe the hilarious antics of O'Brien, Birnbaum, and Schultz, those three stalwart members of New York's Finest. Nor of the Greenwich Village poetess who relentlessly insists on reciting her latest inspiration in the very teeth of murder.

Ever since the first CRAIG RICE manuscript arrived at Inner Sanctum Mysteries four years ago, the editors have been floundering in a welter of adjectives—their own and critics'—to express the captivating quality of this author's novels. Closest approximation is the following paragraph from a letter written by LOUIS UNTERMEYER:

It is not exactly a blend—a composite of ACATHA CHRISTIE's ingenuity, DASHIELL HAMMETT's speed, and DOROTHY SAYERS' wit—but a combination and an idiom as unique as it is engrossing. I cannot imagine myself skipping a line by CRAIG RICE."

So, if you're in the mood to be having wonderful time, read

HAVING WONDERFUL CRIME

by Craig Rice

AN INNER SANCTUM MYSTERY • PRICE \$2.00

PUBLISHED BY SIMON AND SCHUSTER

The Criminal Record			
The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction			
Title and Author	Crime, Place, and Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
FAREWELL TO THE ADMIRAL Peter Cheyney (Dodd, Mead: \$2.)	Private Investigator Slim Callaghan meets tough and seductive characters in trailing slayer of elderly Briton.	Tough-fibred hero, his philandering assistant, and galaxy of slinky ladies and hardboiled gents give yarn tart flavor.	On the cheap side
CELLINI SMITH Robert Reeves (Houghton, Mifflin Co.: \$2.)	Several murders in and near California hobo camp give detective Smith personal injury and other tough moments.	Good tough hobo dialog. Plenty of excitement, a brash and likeable detective, and thrills by the gallon.	Very good
DEATH LOVES A SHINING MARK Anne Hocking (Crime Club: \$2.)	Glamor girl, in Cairo during present war, meets expected end. Major Austen solves it.	Interesting background and full cast of striking characters. Tale has more than ordinary amount of emotion and interesting wind up.	Good
SAID WITH FLOWERS Anne Nash (Crime Club: \$2.)	Lively proprietresses of California flower shop find corpse almost on doorstep. Their efforts land the criminal.	"Karp the Killer," who monograms his crimes, gives yarn satisfactorily sinister fillip and both dialog and action are bright and swiftly-paced.	Entertaining

The Phoenix Nest

IT really looks as though Spring were coming, which makes the heart expand, and that is why I have not got around to replying to a feverish letter from a certain E. N. Emmett of San Francisco who is sure that my Gremlin, Moses Gramling, is in the pay of "the New Deal moguls." He wants the *SRL* to get out a Fourth Term Number, and so far as I am concerned, I welcome the idea; but then I don't run the magazine. Moses was around the other day, though I didn't see him. But he dropped one of his memoranda, which got lost under some papers, and I didn't find it till pretty late. And E. B. White in the *New Yorker* had, in the meanwhile, done such a beautiful job on a certain freshman Congresswoman's letter to the President, that this of Moses's can hardly vie. Nevertheless:

Congress makes mistakes, Mr. President—
Just itty bitty mistakes;
But we wish, so long as you are resident,
You'd have pity on our pains and aches.
We try! We try! We try, Mr. President!

A Poem on Airplanes

May Henderson Taylor of Los Angeles says the P-38's are very active at their practise these days, out her way. "I watched them from my porch steps the other afternoon, as they went through their paces to the south, and I'm enclosing a sonnet I wrote about them—

P-38's

Athwart the dazzling monstrosity of the sun,
four shapes, twin-tailed and luminous, aspire
on glittering wings; swift skimming,
one by one,
the trackless turnings of a widening gyre.
Dancing in beauty on the floorless air,
they move, throughout the golden afternoon,
in slow-paced pavans, brisk boleros,
where
sings neither viol nor flute, nor any tune.
But it is no caprice that bids them soar,

these gleaming battle-eagles of ours that hover,
ruffling the air with metronomic roar;
the swirl, the tumble, and the sharp recover
prefigure stoops upon an enemy prey.
Deadly! And yet, from here, it looks like play."

I wish to thank August W. Derleth of Sauk City, Wisconsin, (not Sauk Centre, Minnesota, where Sinclair Lewis come from!), Bertha Geis Biggheiser, of Winston-Salem, N. C., and Eldon Emerson Smith of Sterling, Colorado, for their comprehensive lists of Little Magazines with their comments upon them. I regret that I have decided I cannot discuss this subject any further, as I must have more space for other matters. I am glad also that Mr. Smith likes the "current affairs comment" in which I have occasionally indulged—likes it as much as Mr. Emmett dislikes it. They ought to meet sometime!

Gardeners. Attend!

Robert A. Gerson of Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, writes:

It will soon be time to stir up that perennial argument about how to pronounce forsythia (or is it "forsythia?"). See if you can remember how to say it, and wistaria too, after you read these examples in feminine rhyme.

ARGUMENT IN FEMININE RHYME

'Tis sad and mysterious
How the wisterias
Wither and die,
While with roots a bit pithier
Hard forsythia
Spreads far and nigh.

The health of wisterias
Seems so precarious
We rate them high;
But, surfeited by the abundant forsythia
We pass them by.

Forsythia golden
To you we're beholden
For early spring joy;
Yet more we're desiring
Wisteria expiring,
They are more coy.

Mr. Gerson adds that, in verse three, the weird spelling indicates that the reader may take his choice!

"Weeping Cross" Again

My friend Louis Dodge of Redondo Beach, California, remembers Henry Longan Stuart's "Weeping Cross." He sends me this:

As a newspaper man I received an advance copy of that book at the time of its publication, and it made an impression upon my mind which is vivid to this day. I was much puzzled at the time to note that so original a novel should be received by

the reading world with so little enthusiasm. It seems to me that the author's somberness, mentioned in your column, might have been caused by the at least comparative failure of so notable a book. If my memory is not at fault, the typographical aspect of the novel was not attractive, there being a long prologue, or introductory section, which was printed in smaller type than the body of the book. I think this might have discouraged many readers—especially in the case of a new writer. In recent years I have wondered why the publishers have not made a second effort to introduce to a larger public so engrossing and original a story.

Back in the old *St. Nicholas* days one of my favorite contributors was J. G. Francis, who did so many cheerful cats and joyous Aztecs. The other day in the big drugstore at the Grand Central, of all places, where several groaning counters sell off publishers' remainders for as low as nineteen cents, I was joyously amazed to find a mint copy of "The Joyous Aztecs," Pictures and verses by J. G. Francis, in a late edition from the Century Company—1929. It wasn't that Francis was so deliciously good a rhymester, but he humanized the Aztecs, though drawing them the way they looked on old wall paintings; just as he humanized his smiling cats, and the other animals that once went to Bayreuth for the Music Festival!

The Aztec Kink could neither smile nor dance,
Life held him in a fixed and formal trance,
until one day the Cheerful Cats
Appeared at Court in wondrous hats
and then—(new picture)

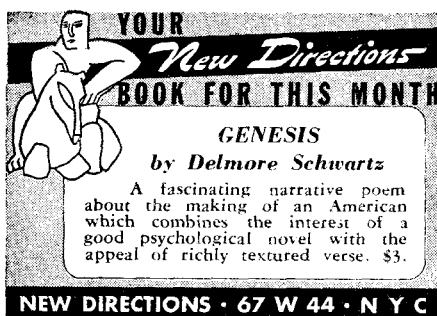
This picture tells the rest of this Romance.

Then there is the one about the frightened fisherman and the awful ocelot; the horrible Homing Bee which looks like no bee I ever imagined; but the one that was longest a household word in our family is entitled "An Aztec Fragment."

It is not alone the dreadful morning bath
That fills this hieroglyphic babe with wrath.
Hie complacent brother's jeers
Start those two resentful tears.
But behold! the Father cometh with a lath.

I suppose it was the idea of retribution richly deserved by the jeerer that made it such a treasured possession! Like John Bennett, Francis created something entirely his own in the realm of graphic humor. And does anyone possibly remember the long-ago "Chip," that forgotten antique of humorous illustration?

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.



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GENESIS
by Delmore Schwartz

A fascinating narrative poem about the making of an American which combines the interest of a good psychological novel with the appeal of richly textured verse. \$3.

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