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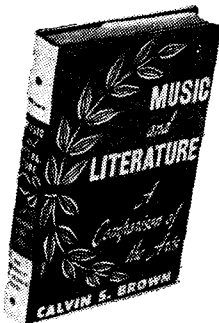
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Virgil Thomson,
New York Herald Tribune

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56

were in something more nearly resembling a tenement. This impression was the inevitable result of the overcrowding. Some seventy or eighty persons were squeezed into a house originally designed for a family of perhaps eight or ten, including servants. Each of the rooms had been converted into an apartment; like Hanau, it had to serve as a combination kitchen, bedroom, living room, and dining room.

It was in one such room that I met Brisca. Dr. Lomask had stayed behind

on the second floor to talk to some people and had suggested that I continue my explorations upstairs. He had told me not to bother to knock, for the tenants on the third floor had left for a picnic outside Bad Nauheim.

Meeting Brisca that day was one of the highlights of my trip. She was about the size and coloration of one of my own daughters and succeeded in giving me one of the worst cases of homesickness known to man.

She was thin and small for her age,

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

| <i>Title and Author</i> | <i>Crime, Place, and Sleuth</i> | <i>Summing Up</i> | <i>Verdict</i> |
|--|--|--|--------------------|
| KISS YOUR ELBOW <i>Alan Handley</i> (McKay: \$2) | Letter-spike skewering of N. Y. actors' agent (fem.) discovered by jobless young Thespian who promptly grabs himself several pecks of trouble. | Much dashing around Manhattan from one apt. to another, garish galaxy of characters, brittle chatter, and tragic pay-off that doesn't convince. | Fairly frantic |
| VOICE OUT OF DARKNESS <i>Ursula Curtiss</i> (Dodd, Mead: \$2.50) | Long-past death suspicion still haunts young Connecticut girl. Current slaying involves her, too. But Lieut. Hooper solves everything handsomely. | Suspenseful, credible, slightly over-emotional, and competently plotted tale of long-range and on-the-spot villainy—worth its "Red Badge" prize. | Good! |
| THE BAITED BLONDE <i>Robinson MacLean</i> (Mill: \$2.50) | Trail of much-wanted scientific formula takes Intelligence operative to postwar Djibouti, where international gang-ructions disturb him constantly. | Something new, fresh, and exciting in intrigue-espionage yarns—due mainly to choicest horde of unprincipled people recently gathered between bindings. | Speedy thriller |
| THE LOCK AND THE KEY <i>Frank Gruber</i> (Rinehart: \$2) | Calif. expert on locks and keys attracts attention of super-powered criminals who use him in murderous big-money job. | Customary detailed Gruber-dope on topics law-abiding reader had better left untried, considerable bloodshed, and extra-angled ending. | Good grade Gruber |
| BAIT FOR MURDER <i>Kathleen Moore Knight</i> (Crime Club: \$2) | Stabbing of literary blackleg on boat off Penberthy Island gives local sleuth Macomber and lady mystery writer case to try their wits. | Swordfishing fleet background provides as many thrills as adequately sinuous murder plot. Macomber is pleasantly taciturn and mystery gal amiably garrulous. | Nice going! |
| HALO FOR SATAN <i>John Evans</i> (Bobbs-Merrill: \$2.50) | Clerical client sets private detective Paul Pine on search for vanished possessor of incredible manuscript, with results both murderous and startling. | Accepting rather unusual premise for "tough guy" mystery this one has rough stuff galore, snapping Mid-West atmosphere and surprise finish. | Lurid and lively |
| THE CASE OF WILLIAM SMITH <i>Patricia Wentworth</i> (Lippincott: \$2.50) | Sundry attempts on life of amnesic war-vet interest Scotland Yarder Abbott and his mentor Miss Silver. They work together admirably. | Placidly diabolic English rural scene, ample violence, satisfactory Silver shrewdness and outcome which ties up everything neatly, including Miss Silver's knitting. | Commendable |
| AND BE A VILLAIN <i>Rex Stout</i> (Viking: \$2.50) | Poisoning, in radio studio, of beverage maker's guest, provides action and needed funds for Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin. | Nero "takes crazy dive into two-foot tank" and snares blackmail killer in hurricane off-stage finish of major adventure. | Better-grade Wolfe |

The Saturday Review

I thought, but fairly healthy. Certainly there was nothing wrong with her grip as she took me by the hand and showed me the rest of the house. But I wondered how it was that Brisca was not off on the Sunday picnic with the others.

She explained that she had two things to do and decided that it might be easier to do them with everyone away. One was to braid her hair; her mother had taught her how to do it regularly when she was two years old; that was five years ago at Buchenwald, one year before her mother died. Another thing Brisca had to do that day, she said, was to write a letter to a little Polish boy at Zeilsheim.

"Joseph is eight years old," Brisca said. "I met him a long, long time ago. Poor, poor Joseph. He doesn't know who his mother was or who his father was. No one knows. He was here one year ago, and Mr. Libsten said he found Joseph at Belsen. Another boy sixteen years old was taking care of Joseph, but that boy didn't know who Joseph was, and no one could tell because the Nazis forgot to tattoo the number on his arm. But Mr. Libsten was very old, and he had friends in Zeilsheim, and they said they would take very good care of Joseph, and that is where he is now. So I write to Joseph in Polish. And I tell him how much I want to see him again and how much I like him and what all the boys and girls here are doing and how is he feeling and I tell him I will be going soon to see him in Zeilsheim."

Brisca's most treasured possession, I later learned from Dr. Lomask, was her memory of her parents. She was all of three when she lost them, but she remembered things her mother taught her, and she remembered that her father would play on the floor with her. She would often talk about her parents with her aunt and uncle, with whom she now lived. And she felt a sense of personal responsibility towards Joseph because he had no memory of his parents, nor did he know anything about them; indeed, he had no way of finding out who he himself was. At least, as Brisca said, she

had tattoo marks to prove who she was. Thus, by a hideous irony, the indelible label of a concentration camp became the badge of belonging to the human race, while unmarred flesh was not regarded as the sign of a free man but as a mark of the disinherited and the anonymous.

When Brisca and I went downstairs to meet Dr. Lomask, we saw that he was still occupied and decided to go off by ourselves. We first visited the public dining room, where one meal a day was served (the other meals are prepared by the D.P.'s in their own rooms with food distributed on a ration plan). Brisca said she had bread and cereal and sometimes warm milk for breakfast; soup and bread for lunch, and soup again for supper—sometimes with a spoonful of meat

it's a crime

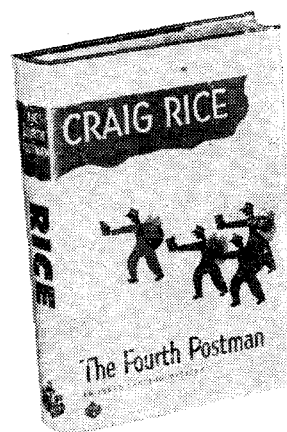
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OCTOBER 9, 1948

57

in it--and potatoes and sometimes another vegetable.

A woman who happened to be in the dining room at the time said that the food had been much better until only a few months ago but had fallen off so badly that it was now the chief source of complaint among the D.P.'s in Bad Nauheim. I asked her how the food compared with what was available to the Germans, and she said that the general feeling was that it had perhaps been superior until recently but that now it was a good deal worse.

We went outside. I told Brisca that my briefcase was full of American chocolate candy bars and chewing gum for her friends. (Brisca knew how to translate chewing gum into all four languages.) We walked down Frankfurter Street, and it was no time at all before my bag was empty. I was warmed by the children's delight but embarrassed by their excessive gratitude as they danced around to get their candy. They seemed healthy, through not robust or sparkling. I was surprised to learn that many of them were actually two to four years older than their size made them appear.

On the way back to say goodbye to Dr. Lomask, Brisca asked me about my own three children and their friends in America and what they did and what their school was like and what they wore and about their toys and whether they had circuses and carnivals like the ones that sometimes came to or near Bad Nauheim. Then: "What is America like? Is it a large place?"

I told her it was a very large place, so large that many countries could fit inside it--Poland and Germany and France and Austria and Czechoslovakia and Great Britain. I told her that there were farms in America almost as large as the entire city of Bad

Neuheim and that you could travel for hours and hours and see nothing but rich wheat growing in the fields. I told her about the large cities and the small villages.

"I think I would like to go to America," she announced. "Will you take me? Will you take my aunt and uncle and their little children?"

What could I say? How should I have answered Brisca? Should I have told her that it was a large country but not large enough, some people said, to take her and her aunt and uncle and two cousins, not large enough for her friends or the other people whom she had known during and after the war? Should I have told her that the people who didn't think it was large enough were the people who made the laws? But then, how would I have explained to her that the men who made the laws decided to allow some displaced persons to come to this country but that there was something in the law that ruled her and her family and friends out because they came from certain sections of Europe and because they had a certain religious background? Could I have explained to her what technicalities were or meant and why they were more important than friendship, more important than understanding, more important than the right things that had to be done?

"Don't you want to talk to me any more?" she asked. "You haven't answered me."

I answered her as best I could. I told her that the war had made things very difficult and very complicated all over the world and that it might take some more time before enough people could get over their fears and hates and understand how much they needed each other. I told her that I didn't know how long it would be before it would be different but that there

were many Americans who were trying very hard to help her. I told her I would ask my government if I could bring her and her uncle and aunt and cousins to live with us.

I think she understood.

* * *

On the way back to Frankfurt that afternoon, I knew a sadness heavier than I had felt for many years. I suppose it was because little Brisca looked so much like my own little girl and because I knew that the monstrous disease that had happened before to cause this misery could happen again and that there was not yet in being in the world the mobilization of sanity at least as large as the growing shape of war.

Three Poems

By Helen Bevington

Of Dorothy Wordsworth

"She would have discovered wonders everywhere."

WHAT in this place would please Her? How can I tell, Of the felicities, What sky of mine would please Her, what leaf excel?

How can I tell— Small lizard in the sun And the persimmon trees— Of the discoveries, Which one?

Which one? Mockingbirds in the pine, Profundities Like Judas, muscadine, Mimosa, hers or mine, Any of these.

The Poet Gay

POET, take the poet Gay: Lighthearted, fat, Beloved of Pope, beloved of Swift, So genial that His way of humming at his rimes (Poet, take note) Lent a sweet tunefulness at times The words he wrote. Beguiler of the coffee house Way Gay, a wit, "Life is a jest" his epitaph That never fit Dark, clouded Swift. Poor Pope could say Nothing like Gay.

De Quincey Wept

DE QUINCEY wept And went on reading. Which way he stepped, De Quincey wept. Books, books, BOOKS kept Insanely breeding. De Quincey wept, And went on reading.



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