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YEARS**

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Death
IN
LORD
BYRON'S
ROOM
By SALLY WOOD
Author of "Murder of a Novelist"
Intrigue? Violence? Ann Thorne
and her niece were innocence
personified, two lovely
sightseers in Switzerland.

to eat: "Isn't it good?" "Madam," he answered, "parts of it are excellent.")

6) That the children identify themselves with the good figures in the comic books. (That is like saying that the spectators in the Grand Guignol who watch the rape, murder, and violence identify themselves with the gendarme who breaks into the room a few seconds before the curtain falls. There are comic books where girls are bound and burned, sold as slaves, thrown to the animals, and rescued only at the last moment by a good and faithful elephant. Do the experts of the comic-book industry claim that the children identify themselves with the elephant?)

7) That the children don't imitate these stories. (But the increase of violence in juvenile delinquency has gone hand in hand with the increase in the distribution of comic books.)

8) That comic books prevent crime and delinquency. (As a matter of fact, we are getting to the roots of one of the contributing causes of juvenile delinquency when we study the influence of comic books. You cannot understand present-day juvenile delinquency if you do not take into account the pathogenic and pathoplastic influence of the comic books, that is, the way in which they cause trouble or determine the form that trouble takes.)

9) That in comic books children are never threatened, killed, or tortured. (But that happens in even "good" comic books. In one comic book a little boy is stuffed into a sack with the following dialogue: "Stop strug-



gling, in you go." And the little boy: "No . . . No . . . I want my mother!"

10) That they are good for reading. (But all the emphasis is on pictures and not on printed matter; and good teachers know that they have to get rid of comic books to make their children read real books.)

11) That comic books make a lot of money. (They do!)

12) That when dealing with crime the comic books show the victory of law and order. (But what they really show is what Margaret Osborn in her novel "The Ring and the Dream" called "the trapped destruction of some human prey.")

13) That comic books must be all right because they are so widespread. (That is like saying that infantile paralysis is all right because so many children have it.)

14) That comic books should be left as they are because curbing them would mean interference with free