

COMMENT

'Now that an element of fluidity has entered into the tactical situation, giving grounds'—writes the military critic—'for a reasoned optimism,' we press for an extension of this fluidity to the world of culture. Outside it is spring, and all over the world a host of 'little magazines' are putting forth their blooms, all deprived by their governments of any opportunity for cross-fertilization. In Italy there are *Aretusa* and *Mercurio*, in Switzerland *Formes et Couleurs* and *Labyrinthe*, in France *Poésies* 45, *Confluences*, *Espirit*, *L'Arbalète*, *L'Eternelle Revue*, *Le Spectateur des Arts*, *Messages*, *Cahiers du Sud*, not to mention the English number of *Fontaine*, which would do credit to any English publication. In North Africa there is *L'Arche*, in Sweden the admirable literary monthly *Nu*, in Cairo there is *Personal Landscape*, in the U.S.A. *Partisan Review*, *Accent*, *Chimaera*, *Kenyon Review*, *Sewanee Review*, *View*, *Triple V*, *The Vedanta of the West*, *Poetry*, *Hemispheres*, to name but a few; in Australia there is *Angry Penguins*, in the Argentine *Sur* and *Lettres Françaises*, and the world over there must be many hundreds more. Yet I doubt if any reader of *HORIZON* can claim to have set eyes on more than half a dozen of these since the war, and many will not even have heard of them, and we are most grateful to anyone who can send a copy here.

The Little Magazine performs three very important functions. It helps to unite young writers into groups who discover common aims, and who can seek out their counterparts in other countries; it enables the older writers to keep the public informed of their interim work (as by the publication of Joyce's 'Ulysses' in *Little Review* or his 'Work in Progress' in *Transition*); and it presents experimental or controversial work by writers who need encouragement and who are as yet incapable of producing a book. When one takes into account as well the time element, the reviews, obituaries and notes of the day, it is obvious that the number and variety of such magazines constitute a valuable indication of the cultural health of a country. They have five enemies, or wicked godmothers: Censorship, Paper Rationing, Currency Regulations, Shipping Space, and Labour Troubles. Censorship is not yet an oppressive feature to a writer in this country; he is not aware of it unless he is an anarchist, a Trotskyite, a book-reviewer, a member of the Civil Service or the armed

forces or a talker on the B.B.C. Paper rationing is particularly severe on little magazines, for the extra thousand copies which they are not allowed to print may make all the difference to their solvency and continued publication. Currency regulations explain why none of us has been able to read a single book review of Edmund Wilson's in the *New Yorker* since he took the job, and shipping space why the French have not yet been able to read any of ours. Labour troubles account for enormous gaps between one number and the next, or for paper covers which come off. Nevertheless, miscellanies continue to be born. *Orion*, a constellation in which every star was lambent, burst from its swaddling clouds and zoomed across the sky, and now *Polemic* (see inside back cover) is stripping for the arena.

What we need is an immediate loosening up of the restrictions which affect the sale and interchange of magazines throughout the world, with the licence to import, export and distribute one another; and an incessant agitation from all the magazines involved, in all their languages against all their various authorities, with the help of all their numerous well-wishers to promote an orgy, a *sacre du printemps*, of exchange and insemination, and so make free for those who need it the penicillin of the Western Mind.¹

¹The article by Croce, specially written for HORIZON, and the story by Alberto Moravia mark the beginning of our cultural relations with the new Italy. The May HORIZON will be devoted to France, and will include unpublished work by Paul Valéry, Paul Eluard and many others.

RANDALL JARRELL
THE DEATH OF
THE BALL TURRET GUNNER

From my mother's sleep I fell into the State
And I hunched in its belly till my wet fur froze.
Six miles from earth, loosed from its dream of life,
I woke to black flak and the nightmare fighters.
When I died they washed me out of the turret with a hose.

[Reprinted from *Partisan Review*]