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SMALL MAGAZINES

EZRA POUND

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The earlier history—I might almost call it the pre-history of the small magazines in America—has been ably and conscientiously presented by Dr. René Taupin in his *L'Influence du Symbolisme Français sur la Poesie Americaine* (Paris: Champion, 1930); and I may there leave it for specialists.

The active phase of the small magazine in America begins with the founding of Miss Monroe's magazine, *Poetry*, in Chicago in 1911. The significance of the small magazine has, obviously, nothing to do with format. The significance of any work of art or literature is a root significance that goes down into its original motivation. When this motivation is merely a desire for money or publicity, or when this motivation is in great part such a desire for money directly or for publicity as a means indirectly of getting money, there occurs a pervasive monotony in the product corresponding to the underlying monotony in the motivation.

The public runs hither and thither with transitory pleasures and underlying dissatisfactions; the specialists say: "This isn't literature." And a deal of vain discussion ensues.

The monotony in the product arises from the monotony in the motivation.

During the ten or twenty years preceding 1912 the then-called "better magazines" had failed lamentably and even offensively to maintain intellectual life. They are supposed to have been "good"

during some anterior period. Henry Adams and Henry James were not, at the starts of their respective careers, excluded; but when we reach our own day, we find that Adams and James had a contempt for American editorial opinion in no way less scalding than—let us say—Mr. Maxwell Bodenheim's, though their expression of it was rarer and suaver.

The elder magazines, the *Atlantic*, *Harper's*, *Scribner's*, *Century*, had even in their original titles more or less and in varying degrees abjured the pretensions of the London "Reviews," i.e., to serious and consecutive criticism of literature. They had grown increasingly somnolent, reminiscences of General Grant being about their maximum effort toward contemporaneity. About the beginning of this century there was a new and livelier current in the trade. The methods of Armour's meat business were introduced into distribution. A commercial talent blossomed in the great firm of Condé Nast. A bright young man observed a leakage in efficiency. The advertising men had to collect such ads as the contents could attract. In the new system the contents were selected rigorously on the basis of how much expensive advertising they would carry. Hence the sameness in impression given by successive numbers of these bright and snappy periodicals. I mean to say that each of these publications expresses, fundamentally, one idea and one only. The thinking man can learn from them one thing only; when he has learned that, he thirsts for further and more diversified knowledge.

It is also to be observed that people who would not be taken in by a free advertising circular are delighted to pay five cents for a mass of printed paper that costs twenty cents to produce. The principle of this had been duly formulated by the late Mr. Barnum.

These things—if the reader will permit me to allow him to take a few intervening steps for himself—these things ultimately leave a vacuum. They leave a need for intellectual communication unconditioned by considerations as to whether a given idea or a given trend in art will "git ads" from the leading corset companies. Or, in the milder zone, whether it happens to agree with what Aunt Hannah had heard from her uncle, and which would therefore "please" or, in the magistral words of one of the editors of the *Atlantic*, be "familiar to our readers."

II

In 1911 Miss Monroe and her backers recognized that verse, to be of any intellectual value, could not be selected merely on the basis of its immediate earning capacity. This idea was not new, but it was not at that moment functioning vigorously in other editorial offices.

I don't know of any other constructive idea that is directly traceable to the Chicago office.

Irritated by the faults of work published in the opening numbers, I compiled a list of the more glaring. This was intended to be used as part of the magazine's rejection slip. I also, for the sake of convenience and to avoid useless discussion of the phrase "good poetry," put a label on a complex of three ideas or principles.

These things appeared in *Poetry* as a manifesto and as "Don'ts of an Imagist."

They were not a complete *ars poetica*. They were of necessity platitudinous. Any science has to start with platitudes (shortest distance between two points, etc.). Dr. Taupin has done me the honor to state that if these propositions were platitudinous, they were, at any rate, a handy summary of the best Latin culture and of common sense about writing.

Poetry provided a place where the tennis about these ideas could be played. Miss Monroe never pretended to adopt either a contemporary, European, or international criterion. Certain principles that Europe had accepted for eighty years have never penetrated her sanctum. It is possible that recognition of these ideas would have prematurely extinguished her magazine. On the other hand, she may never have grasped these ideas. She has repeatedly protected her readers; i.e., she has assumed that the intelligence of her readers is so far below that of the authors whom she has printed that the readers are at certain points not permitted to read and to judge for themselves what the writers believe.

We Europeans consider this an insult to the reader; and "we" (the author of these presents), as an American, consider it a pessimistic lack of confidence in our compatriots.

Miss Monroe has occasionally mutilated a work by excisions and

has occasionally failed to see the unity of a longer work and given it in fragments.

Nevertheless, she has done valuable service by reason of the purity of her intentions. She meant to provide a place where unknown poets could be printed; she has done so. Where new ideas and forms could be tried, she has done so. She has provided a meal ticket when the meal ticket was badly needed.

She has printed on her own motion Mr. Lindsay's "General Booth Enters Heaven."

She has printed, after six months argument with me, Mr. Frost.

She printed (after Marion Reedy had with great difficulty persuaded him to write *Spoon River*) some poems by E. L. Masters.

She printed, after six months argument with me, Mr. T. S. Eliot's *Prufrock*.

She printed me a year or so after Mr. Mencken had done so.

She printed without protest the early work of "H. D." and of Aldington; work by Yeats, F. M. Hueffer (Ford).

She also mutilated my "Homage to Sextus Propertius" at a time when I had to take what I could get, and long after I had ceased to regard *Poetry* or its opinion as having any weight or bearing or as being the possible implement or organ for expressing any definite thought.

The Review served as a forum from 1912 to 1914, perhaps to 1917. It served, and probably still serves, as a meal ticket; and among its now unknown writers there may be some who will emerge as formed literati.

III

The term "art movement" usually refers to something immobile. It refers to a point or an intersection or a declaration of conclusions arrived at. When the real movement or ascent has occurred, such a declaration is made, and things remain at that point or recede.

A movement for the purgation of poetic writing occurred from 1908 till 1914. Later Mr. Eliot added certain complexities.

The principles of purgation declared in the DONT'S were, in varying degree, applied to western United States subject matter by various authors. Of the authors who refused to recognize them, Vachel Lindsay alone remains known. He had got hold of another

essential; and by reason of it survives, more or less. Poetry should be speakable or singable, as Mr. Lindsay ceaseth not to declare. Mr. Lindsay's limitations can be observed by the reader for himself.

Miss Monroe's sympathies were obviously with Mr. Lindsay; with Mr. Masters, who declined; and with Mr. Sandburg, who increased, who cut the bunk out of his writing in measure as Mr. Masters inserted it in his.

Poetry continues as a very meritorious trade journal. It was not open to general ideas. It persists by reason of having limited itself to poetry. The action of literature in prose and in ideas was continued in the *Egoist*. The history of these free non-commercial reviews can be most briefly told by a list of their contents:

Poetry had printed the authors I have mentioned, and the others found in its indexes. The *Egoist* took on what the *New Age* would not print. The *New Age* was a durable London weekly devoted to guild socialism but allotting a few pages of each issue to art and letters regardless of their economic bearing and indifferent to their capacity to please the British *universitaire* taste.

The *Egoist* serialized Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist*; and Wyndham Lewis' *Tarr*. It printed more information about French and other Continental writers than other British reviews would carry. The term "Little Magazines" might seem to exclude the *English Review* as it was in 1908 and 1909 to 1910. It had the format of an old established review. It professed vainly to take its place with other permanent periodicals. It failed into obscure glory. It committed the error of not dying in its own name. It was denatured and voided of significance. Nevertheless, it might be taken as paradigm. It was, under Ford Madox Hueffer (Ford), the most brilliant piece of editing I have known. In its first year and a half it printed not only the work of Hardy, Swinburne, Henry James, Anatole France, various other monuments, various other writers of extensive reputation (Wells, Galsworthy, Bennett, etc.), but it also printed the work of, I think, all the first-rate and second-rate (as distinct from third-, fourth-, and fifth-rate) writers then in London: Wyndham Lewis, D. H. Lawrence (his earliest printed work), myself, Cannan, Walpole, etc. Eliot had not then reached London. Joyce's *Dubliners*

was not then written, or at any rate the manuscripts were not submitted.

After Mr. Hueffer was given the gate, Mr. Willard Huntingdon Wright (at, I believe, Mr. Mencken's suggestion) tried to transform the *Smart Set* and to create an American equivalent to Hueffer's English review.

He knocked his circulation from 70,000 to 40,000 in, if I remember rightly, the first six months. He then told the objecting proprietors that the gulf which separated them was vast and impassable, and handed in his resignation. Thus ended the quixotic attempt to turn a successful periodical into an intellectual organ. He had managed to print a few of the stories from *Dubliners* and a few of D. H. Lawrence's best. Either he or Mencken reprinted a good deal of my *Ripostes* from the London edition. He had tried to buy up all the best stuff then on the London market. I received the impression that he rather expected to find Mr. Thomas Hardy sitting behind a ticket window passing out manuscripts at so much "per thousand." But it was a gallant effort and shows that intellectual hunger and the attempt to provide for it are not the exclusive property of the tattered eccentric.

Mr. Mencken solved his own problem in the *American Mercury*. I leave this subject to the tender mercies of the younger generation of critics. The *Mercury* has been hermetically sealed against almost all writing which seems to me to have any permanent interest or value, but that does not necessarily imply that it is either otiose or void of utility.

IV

The origins of the small review are lost in obscurity. Rossetti and Swinburne contributed to a *Westminster Quarterly* that rose and faded, etc. The *English Review* in 1908 had, I presume, Continental inspiration. The editor wanted to do in England something comparable to what he saw done in France. The *Egoist*, at least the literary segment, wanted to carry on without capital what the *English Review* had done by squandering its fiscal resources. The original intentions of those who start papers are not always salient in their history. The *Egoist* started as a woman's rights paper; the *Little Review* started apparently as a reaction against the excessive mod-

ernism of Miss Monroe's *Poetry*. Mr. Ficke in its pages set out to prove that the sonnet was "Gawd's owne city." Some years later (i.e., in, I think, 1916) Miss Anderson printed a number with half the pages blank and the threat to print the next number wholly blank if she couldn't find something fit to put in it.

This date coincided with several events, notably a disturbed condition in Europe. Mr. Lewis had brought out one *Blast* in July, 1914. One more number appeared in 1915. Due to lack of English competition there was no trouble about sending manuscripts to the United States.

From 1917 to 1919 the *Little Review* printed all that Mr. Wyndham Lewis produced; it printed nearly all that either Mr. Eliot or I produced. It wrote itself almost immediately into the history of European letters by publishing the opening chapters of *Ulysses*. It printed work by Yeats, Lady Gregory, John Rodker.

So far as one could gather, it was regarded as wildly erratic and unbalanced. Mr. Ben Hecht protested. He told me the editors were ignorant; that I had no conception of the depth, height, and extensiveness of their ignorance. He said that it was complete and all-embracing, and that I was making these people a clearing house for European literature and thereby effecting a crime.

The triviality and frivolity of the *Little Review* will be instantly apparent to anyone who will take the trouble to open my *Instigations*, which is largely reprinted from the *Review's* pages. From the districts west of New York Miss Anderson received the manuscripts of Mr. Sherwood Anderson, Mr. Maxwell Bodenheim, Mr. Hecht, aforementioned.

The law under which the *Review* was suppressed may be read by any member of the public who will take the trouble to do so. It is reprinted in my *Instigations*. Most readers will not take the trouble to read it. They can also find a reference to it in Mr. Cummings' play *Him*.

After its suppression as a monthly the *Little Review* re-emerged as a "more or less" *Quarterly*. It gave the first adequate publication of photos of Brancusi's sculpture. It printed Mr. Hemingway and Mr. Cocteau in translation. I had a hand in preparing several of

these quarterly issues but was finally ejected for frivolity. Mr. Hilaire Hiler and I shared the editorial disapproval.

As far as possible, I am trying to confine this article to statement of the positive achievement of various impractical publications and to avoid personal anecdote save where such anecdote is necessary to clear understanding of what happened or how it was possible.

The agreement on which I had taken the foreign editorship of the *Little Review* had been that I was to choose half the contents; that John Quinn was to provide \$750 annually for two years for foreign editor's salary and payment of foreign contributors; and that the American editors were to provide for the printing and distribution. After a few months of the new program (Lewis, Eliot, Joyce, and myself, with promise of a few older and established writers) the American editors prevailed on Quinn to prevail on himself and his friends to provide \$5,000 for production expenses. This was done without my knowledge. Quinn was soon dissatisfied with the New York management. I have no wish to register an unasked opinion as to the relative causes of irritation. Quinn urged me with no inconsiderable violence to emerge from the partnership, and a few years later arranged that I take on a sort of informal foreign function for the *Dial*.

In 1916, or the end of 1915, Thayer had been in England and had been on the point of contributing a small sum toward the starting of an independent review under the direction of myself and Eliot. For reasons unknown to me he left the country without further reference to the matter or to his promise or offer. Thayer's and my point of view seldom coincided. The *Dial* stated that it could not expect to be my spiritual home, and requested me to collect manuscripts from a number of European authors, essentially the *Little Review* list with George Moore and Alice Meynell added, plus certain foreign writers with "names"—Anatole France, etc.

As nearly as I can now discern, the *Dial* wanted to be in America what the *Mercure* had been in France. It was, however, more retroactive than the *Mercure* had been in its better days. It cannot be said that my early relations with the *Dial* were in any way comfortable. During its ten years of existence the *Dial* obviously paid a considerable sum of money to authors and was to that extent use-

ful in so far as these authors were meritorious and, during that period, needy. The reader must judge for himself whether the *Dial* in ten years had more effect on American literary life than the *Little Review* during its two years of most active existence, or than the *Little Review* as monthly and later as quarterly.

I retain the view that Thayer could have had more fun for his money, for a great deal less money, if he had gone on with the earlier scheme; but perhaps it was not the sort of fun he was looking for. There may have been advantages in having a review that looked sober and authoritative. There may have been advantages in being able to buy the work of any author one chose and to refuse Arnold Bennet. I retain the opinion that if the *Dial*, when it had got round to printing L. Aragon as early as 1921, had crammed the manuscripts I collected into six issues instead of dragging them through twenty-four, it would have provided a greater liveliness. I am not sure that the *Dial* would like to see itself listed among little reviews. It had the merit of selecting its manuscripts, if not with unmixed motive, at least with some motive other than expediency.

It stood for what I consider at least one false idea, namely, that criticism is as important as original writing.

It is, curiously enough, not so important that an editorial policy should be right as that it should succeed in expressing and giving clear definition to a policy or set of ideas. A review is not a human being saving its soul, but a species of food to be eaten. Healthy reaction, constructive reaction, can start from a wrong idea clearly defined, whereas mere muddle effects nothing whatever.

Poetry had begun with a pure heart. It had had one clear enunciation of views as to style or to good writing.

The *Little Review* had had the pure heart à *outrance*. Its editors never accepted a manuscript save because they thought it interesting, and their review remains the most effective of any we have yet had.

The *Dial* has, however, left its imprint. I believe that criticism is now more thorough and less sloppy than it was ten years ago. I am not sure that the *Dial* ever profited greatly by its idea. It seems to me that this newer sobriety in criticism has begun to *show* only during the last few years. And it must be recognized that the *Dial* was not the only periodical working to this end.

I cannot say that the ideas Mr. Eliot has selected to have discussed in his *Criterion* have been unfailingly lively. Many of them seem to me to be unworthy of any human attention whatsoever, and he persists in printing one or two scribblers who are beneath all possible biological contempt. Nevertheless, he has induced a care in the use of critical terms that was absent during the antecedent period of critical or reviewatorial slop. The gulf, for example, between the expression of a theological opinion by Mr. Chesterton and by Mr. Eliot is a gulf great and impassable.

If the *Criterion* is not strictly a magazine "in the United States," it emerged definitely from American racial sources; and the story of American letters cannot be told without mention of it (or of the *Egoist* and, in less degree, the *New Age*).

The *Little Review* during its most brilliant years had been, among other things, trying to "civilize America," i.e., to introduce international standards of criticism. *Poetry*, as I have tried to indicate, had refused to make this attempt, and still refuses to do so. A man who asks favors for his work because it is written in some particular place appears to me to be not patriotic but merely pusillanimous.

The *Criterion* has tried to extend this program and to introduce international critical standards in England—a far more difficult task, a task almost hopelessly quixotic.

You cannot, however, divide literary history on a merely geographic basis. In 1910 or 1912 France was immeasurably ahead of us in poetry and, save for Henry James, in prose.

With the exhaustion of France and with the introduction of international standards we arrived by 1920–25, to the present, at a new condition of things. An American book is now quite often as good as a French book or a European book. American books do not circulate freely in Europe because an American book is seldom worth four or five European books. It has cost four or five times as much. This problem of international communication is a matter of publisher's economics, not of intellectual standards.

V

As I see it, "we" in 1910 wanted to set up civilization in America. By 1920 one wanted to preserve the vestiges or start a new one any-

where that one could. Against the non-experimental caution of *Dial* and *Criterion*, the *transatlantic review* was founded in Paris, Ford Madox Ford as editor, Quinn as sustaining member. It printed work by Hemingway, Robert McAlmon, and Cummings. Cummings was already established, via, I think, *S 4 N* and the *Dial*.

S 4 N had attempted to establish a critical group in New England —Fitts, Munson, and, I think, Winter. I have up to now failed to discover any active fecund principle in the work of this group; but they, as I see it, were working with pure intention.

It was reported in Paris that the *transatlantic* ceased because the payment never came for copies “sold” in America. At any rate, it ceased and *transition* reigned in its stead.

This paper has published the later Joyce and his epigons. It has provided space for experiment. One should dissociate the ideas of experiment and of significant achievement.

Honest literary experiment, however inclusive, however dismally it fail, is of infinitely more value to the intellectual life of a nation than exploitation (however glittering) of mental mush and otiose habit.

The stutterings of a Stein are more productive of thought than the highly paid copy of some of Mr. Lorimer’s *deorlings*.

The best criticism of Miss Stein known to me has been unconsciously recorded in another “fugitive” publication, namely, Mr. Walsh’s *This Quarter*.

In a list of notes on contributors we find that Miss Stein took “postgrad” work in psychology at Johns Hopkins, giving special attention to “fatigue and unconscious responses.”

As for the abuse of the stream of consciousness theories in writing, once it has been asserted that this stream is conglomerate, a mixture of impressions, of half-ideas, intersections, emergencies, etc., and once this is recognized, we return mentally enriched very probably; but nevertheless we return to the value of arrangements, to the value of clear definitions, to the value of design in composition.

The stream of consciousness in *Ulysses* is as different from any stream of consciousness that has actually occurred as is a plot of Racine’s. It is equally a composition and a condensation. After the principle of “conscious flow” has been manifested, the relative value

of presentations of such imagined streams will depend, as writing in the past has depended, on the richness of the content and on the author's skill in arranging it. There is no formula that can, by merely getting itself adopted, enable a man to exceed his own capacity.

VI

After the *Little Review* had become effective, the *Egoist* for a brief period took to publishing books, among them Lewis' *Tarr*, Eliot's *Pruſſock*, my *Quia Pauper Amavi*, Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist*.

The *Three Mountains* and *Contact Presses* continued this work: First by a prose series (*The Inquest*) intended to examine the state of prose after *Ulysses*. It contained work by F. M. Ford, W. C. Williams, E. P., B. C. Windeler, B. M. G. Adams, and Mr. Hemingway. The series might have been useful if it could have been issued within a few months. Dragged out over a couple of years, it was merely lost and served no critical purpose.

The active interest in prose centered in the opposed methods of Hemingway and McAlmon. Hemingway to all extents and purposes accepting the principles of good writing that had been contained in the earliest imagist document, and applying the stricture against superfluous words to his prose, polishing, repolishing, and eliminating, as can be seen in the clean hard paragraphs of the first brief *In Our Time*, in *They All Made Peace*, in *The Torrents of Spring*, and in the best pages of his later novels. McAlmon taking the other road, that is to say, taking a fresh canvass, a fresh wad of typing paper, and beginning a new story whenever he has failed in a first one.

McAlmon remains (A.D. 1930) the one very important American writer whom no American publisher will touch with a ten-foot pole. Nevertheless, there is a greater variety of character and of situation, a greater fidelity to the scene and the life before him, than in other American writers. There is less of the received idea. There is a greater readiness to tackle hitherto untackled material. There is no effort to exploit the already exploited literary situations. There is already a more extended panorama of contemporary life than in other writers.

Henry James spent all his life trying to be the dispassioned observer. He attained this state only at moments; he was continually shocked at the crudities of human behavior. Even in later years, when he expected nothing, his inner nobilities continually reminded him of a nobler possible state.

The freshness of McAlmon's writing is due to his unperturbed gaze. He paints the action before him as Manet would have painted the colors.

At the end of 1926 *This Quarter* had been suspended by reason of Walsh's death. There was no magazine in which one could issue Rodker's *Adolphe*. The first issue of *Exile* was already in the press before I heard of the plans for *transition*. In *Exile* I managed to publish *Adolphe* and a little work by McAlmon, W. C. Williams, Louis Zukofsky, and one poem by Howard Weeks. I printed very little of Weeks because he seemed to me a man of great promise; I mean, one felt that his work was bound to be ever so much better in the course of the next few months. The few months were denied him.

VII

The value of fugitive periodicals "of small circulation" is ultimately measured by the work they have brought to press. The names of certain authors over a space of years, or over, let us say, the past score years, have been associated with impractical publication.

Carlos Williams has communicated with his readers almost exclusively via the reviews I have mentioned or by others even less public. Maxwell Bodenheim, Mina Loy, Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, "H. D.," and a long list of poets and versifiers have circulated via such media. Kreymborg has given disinterested endeavor to managing and distributing small periodicals. I cannot see that Kreymborg has ever understood language. He is an excellent chess player. Chess is a highly conventionalized game. Each piece moves in a certain, set, determined way. Words do not function in this manner. They are like the roots of plants: they are organic, they interpenetrate and tangle with life, you cannot detach them as pieces of an anatomical figure. The dissection of capillary and vein is at a certain stage no longer possible.

The last twenty years have seen the principle of the free magazine or the impractical or fugitive magazine definitely established. It has attained its recognized right to exist by reason of work performed.

The work of writers who have emerged in or via such magazines outweighs in permanent value the work of the writers who have not emerged in this manner. The history of contemporary letters has, to a very manifest extent, been written in such magazines. The commercial magazines have been content and are still more than content to take derivative products ten or twenty years after the germ has appeared in the free magazines. There is nothing new about this.

Work is acceptable to the public when its underlying ideas have been accepted. The heavier the "overhead" in a publishing business the less that business can afford to deal in experiment. This purely sordid and eminently practical consideration will obviously affect all magazines save those that are either subsidized (as chemical research is subsidized) or else very cheaply produced (as the penniless inventor produces in his barn or his attic).

Literature evolves via a mixture of these two methods.

VIII

At the present moment there are a number of free reviews in activity. Of these the *Hound and Horn* appears to me the most solid. It has taken over the heritage of whatever was active in the *Dial*. It has got rid of nearly all of the *Dial's* dead wood and rubbish. This purgation may endanger its safety.

The advance in critical writing which I have mentioned seems to me apparent in Zukofsky's essay on Henry Adams serialized in *Hound and Horn*, and in Hyatt Mayors' criticism of painting.

Morada, edited at Albuquerque, New Mexico, by Norman Macleod, appears to me the best bet as a successor to the *Little Review* (and is, naturally, in the worst financial condition of any of the new reviews).

Other periodicals in incubation can only be judged on their programs. I have, personally, a very strong belief in the clear an-

nouncement of a program—any program. A review that can't announce a program probably doesn't know what it thinks or where it is going. A review that can make two clear programs one after the other is as good as two reviews. Even the *Criterion* had a program *in manuscript*. I doubt if an effective program can contain more than three ideas. One idea and its environment is probably enough for one magazine. There was a magazine in Tennessee, or somewhere out that way, and from it emerged Crowe Ransom. There was a magazine and so forth. There is a magazine called *Blues*; there is a magazine called the *Review of* ——. There is, or was, a magazine of verse called *Palms*; it printed a good deal of verse and was probably the best poetry magazine of its time, but it printed only verse. The little magazines that have printed only verse or only fiction have not been as effective as those which printed also editorial and critical matter. They are always more "fugitive." Fruit unrelated to tree. Cut flowers. The active periodical is something different from an anthology collected after the fact. And the periodical anthology does not enter active contemporary life as effectively as the review that definitely, even with foolhardiness, asserts its hope and ambition. There is a definite legitimate and fruitful editorial function. It is, presumably, useless unless it has fine creative work or a masterpiece to work on. And the masterpiece endures, or can endure, without the editorial assistance.

Where there is not the binding force of some kind of agreement, however vague or unanalyzed, between three or four writers, it seems improbable that the need of a periodical really exists. Everyone concerned would probably be happier in publishing individual volumes.

Even a political or economic program probably furnishes a better binding force than a purely dilettante association. For example, cut off the politico-economic policy of the *New Masses* and you could probably make a better purely literary magazine with work of its contributors than with work by a set of contributors having no common denominator.

I have not dealt with the work of the *New Age* or the *New Masses* or other papers devoted to social and economic causes because they

seem to me a totally different subject from that proposed to me. Michael Gold exists as a writer apart from his editorial activities. So do a number of his contributors.¹

CONCLUSION

In any such summary as this there are bound to be omissions. I trust I have managed to indicate the main line of work done by the free reviews and to show that they have well earned their keep. No one is safe in assuming that a few sheets in small and tawdry format are wholly devoid of merit. Nothing but unusual flair or a sound knowledge of past literature, or *both* in conjunction, can assure the reader that he will find the rich kernels. There are plenty of people over forty who are willing to acknowledge that Mr. Joyce, Mr. Eliot, and the rest appeared (past tense) ten or fifteen years ago in small and allegedly eccentric magazines, and who are, on the other hand, wholly unwilling to behave as if writers who will, in ten^o or fifteen years, hold analogous positions in the world of letters may conceivably be now (1930-31) appearing in magazines as apparently tawdry and freakish. For the enlivenment of public instruction one can only recommend that the pedagogue be aware of what has already (i.e., up to A.D. 1930) occurred and that he should maintain a species of open-mindedness toward the possible and the plausible.

The new thing that is to be durable does not spring up without roots. Joyce did not begin as an eccentric. His "Chamber Music" was in highly conventional form. Through *Dubliners*, *The Portrait*, and into *Ulysses* one sees the parenthood of Flaubert; and in his *Exiles*, the current from Ibsen.

¹ As I correct these proofs (July 27, 1930), the following independent American reviews "in good standing," known to me and presumably capable of presenting valuable literary work, are, apart from those already sufficiently indicated: *Hound and Horn*; *Criterion*; *transition*, now defunct; *Poetry*; *Palms* (ed. I. Purnell and J. Weatherwax), Mexico, Oregon, and New York; *This Quarter* (ed. E. Titus), 4 rue Delambre, Paris, vi; *Morada* (ed. N. Macleod), 220 North Maple Street, Albuquerque, New Mexico (announces next issue will be printed in Munich); *Pagany* (ed. R. Johns, 109 Charles Street, Boston (featuring W. C. Williams); *Blues* (ed. C. H. Ford), 12 East Fifteenth Street, New York City (aspires apparently to heritage of *transition*); *The New World*, 62 West Thirty-seventh Street, New York City; *The Miscellany*, New York City.