

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

A Message from the Editors. "The Dead Season".

Mann, Klaus

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

. "The Dead Season." .

Why should we, the editors, always yield the floor to our friend, the business manager, when it comes to wooing our potential readers? Business Managers are, of course, very shrewd and experienced; but they are not infallible: in fact, they sometimes make mistakes.

One of their pet theories is that the summer is a completely "dead" season -- absolutely hopeless as far as the magazine trade is concerned. They take it for granted that, for some strange and compelling reason, no American could be persuaded to subscribe to a magazine during the period from early June until the middle of September. "A mail campaign? Now? Just ^{at the beginning of} ~~when the summer begins?~~" The business manager shrugged his shoulders -- all contempt and bitter superiority. "It's a waste of money, that's all," he concluded with a sort of gloomy satisfaction -- stubbornly pessimistic.

But the writers and editors can be stubborn as well. "Why shouldn't people sit down with a nice magazine on a nice summer afternoon? In fact, we are inclined to believe that summer is a much better season for reading than the winter when so much is going on to distract you -- concerts and parties, new plays, and what not. Believe us or not," we insisted, "June, July, and August are the most promising times, indeed, the ideal months for a magazine like Decision. Think of the long, lovely evenings in the country. . .!

But the business manager refused to think of anything except of his ugly experiences and dreary calculations. He was adamant. "There will be no mail campaign for this magazine until the Dead Season is over," he decided mercilessly.

Finally, we became rather nervous. "All right, then!" we announced -- trying to look grim and determined. "We'll do it -- without you!"

His answer was only a sneer. --

So the whole matter has developed into an affair of honor between the business department and the editors. We have to prove our point to those arrogant experts. We must

Adams

get heaps of subscriptions during these summer months. It would be utterly embarrassing for us if this campaign turned out to be a failure.

Please, don't let us down!

"In these troubled days. . ."

Another defeatist axiom we disapprove of, and, therefore, want to refute, is that people, in turbulent days such as ours, do not care for serious literature. According to this discouraging theory, the public wishes to be either thrilled or diverted; the only two patterns appealing to readers in the time of crisis is a sensational journalism or a romantic escapism.

But we know better. We know that there are men and women whose interest in serious reading matter does not dwindle but rather increases -- in these troubled days. For they want to understand what is at stake in this tremendous struggle; they are hankering for a bit of truth and clarity -- craving for some moral comfort and intellectual advice while everything seems to reel and to crumble around them. Newspapers and the radio are indispensable but they are not enough: they give the facts but not the intrinsic sense behind the terrific drama. Books are good -- a reassuring company in the hours of apprehension. At other moments, however, they seem too remote -- so strangely disconnected from the ever-changing problems of our restless and strenuous lives.

Why not try a magazine? A monthly dealing with both the timely and the timeless aspects of human affairs. You may find it satisfactory: more detached than the daily press and yet close enough to the torrent of current events.

The idea of this magazine was conceived and carried out under the auspices of these troubled days. It exists, not in spite of the present crisis, but because of it.

"To what type of Readers does your Magazine appeal?"

Is this a magazine for "intellectuals"? -- By no means -- if you use this term in the narrow and somewhat pretentious sense in which it is often employed. This is not a magazine of the last inhabitants of the crumbling Ivory Tower. Nor is it a magazine for

inflexible
for Marxists and other orthodox prophets who ~~are constantly pleased about their possessing~~
the sole possession of
~~the~~ absolute truth and refuse to see that reality constantly refutes their rigid systems.

We do not appeal to any specific class, political group or literary clique. We have found our friends, and hope to find more of them, among teachers and musicians, doctors and businessmen, executives and poets, soldiers and movie stars, librarians and housewives, college boys and reporters, artists and clergymen, engineers and professors, intelligent workingmen and intelligent society ladies. We receive many letters from very different types of people — young and old, poor and wealthy, highbrow or naive. Some of these letters are critical: we consider them seriously, and ~~we~~ *if* deem the criticism justified, we try to correct the particular mistake pointed out by the correspondent. Others ~~bring~~ *bring* us praises and flatteries. All these ~~epistles~~ *letters*, however, no matter whether ~~are~~ *are* they express approval or disapproval — ~~represent to us~~ *represent to us* encouraging tokens. For they ~~establish~~ *establish* that ~~the~~ *of interest* intrinsic community between readers and editors — that mysterious ~~support~~ *bond* without which no magazine can live up to its ~~immanent potentialities~~ *objectives* — already exists, or is on the point of ~~becoming~~ *existing*, between our audience and us.

This audience has grown larger from month to month since we started our operations, last January. It is not yet large enough. We want to win new friends. We have ten-thousand readers now: We may have twenty-thousand tomorrow. We hope to increase before long their number up to thirty-thousand or so.

Twenty thousand — forty thousand readers are a powerful crowd, provided that they are the right sort of people and it's the right sort of stuff they are reading. Thirty-thousand bright and vigilant readers means thirty-thousand channels connecting us with that vast reservoir of inarticulate forces — the masses, the people, the amorphous and fertile humus on which the life of a nation is based. No literary review can hope to reach, to impress those millions. But we do hope to reach and to impress them — indirectly, through the intercession of an intelligent minority. If we succeed in gaining their confidence — the confidence of educators and thinking youth, of the creative minds and the enlightened citizens — we have won altogether.

To what type of people does this magazine appeal?

To all people with common sense and curiosity and good will; who are fond of fine and delicate things but not afraid of crude realities; to lively people, thinking people, open-minded people.

We appeal to you, and to you -- and to you too!

Our Policy

Did we succeed in giving you an adequate idea of our editorial policy? If you are still uncertain as to our intentions and aspirations -- may we suggest that you look at the following pages? What you will find there is an incomplete survey of some of the things we have done during the past six months, and ^{an} even more fragmentary account of what we are planning for.

You will notice that the scope of subjects that we try to cover, is rather extensive indeed. So is the list of our contributors -- including some of the most distinguished American and European names along with the names of young, almost unknown, writers. There are poems about love and about conquered cities; stories about animals and children, playboys and soldiers, philosophers and thieves; there are essays on style and on poets -- dead poets, living poets, exiled poets; many articles about books and pictures and music and others dealing with labor problems, scientific accomplishments, governmental projects, freedom of the press; there are reflections ^{on} ~~about~~ democracy and its crisis, and manifestos ^{on} ~~about~~ the war, and prophecies invoking the danger and the promise of coming things.

What is the policy behind this ^{varied} ~~policy~~ program?

We believe that culture, under the conditions of modern life, is an indivisible entity -- utterly complex and very delicate, for all its seeming stability and ^{vast} ~~impressive~~ extensiveness. We consider it preposterous to be concerned with ethical and aesthetic matters but to neglect the urgent social and political issues. And we think that the social and political issues are important ^{largely} ~~because~~ because they influence or determine the standards and developments of culture.

We believe that culture is, or should become, primarily human -- not primarily national. In fact, there will be an international culture, based on a solid international scheme of political and economic organization -- or there will be no culture at all.

We are keenly interested in all aspects and achievements of American civilization, because it is the only civilization that may emerge undamaged and intact from the present calamity, and because it is here, in these United States, that the inspiring pattern of a new universal culture may be conceived and shaped.

There is no hope for cultural developments until the curse of Nazism is taken from this suffering planet.

We are partisans in this war. We believe that culture is doomed if Nazi Germany wins. We ~~don't~~^{not} deem this war an imperialist adventure. It has begun as a war for the survival of democracy, and may end with the transformation and rejuvenation of the democratic way of life.

We want passionately the victory of Great Britain and the United States.

Our function and contribution is to maintain and to develop, ^{within} ~~according to~~ our limited ^{powers} ~~possibilities~~, those high ideas and noble impulses for the sake of which the suffering is bearable and victory will be worth while.

Decision is neither a political magazine nor a journal of ~~aesthetics~~. We want it to be something more mixed, more daring, more provocative.

Our dream and our policy is to produce a Review of Free Culture.

* * * * *

"Decidedly there was a place for Decision and you have started out remarkably well . More power to you."

Justen O'Brien , Columbia University

"Decision fills a real need today, now more than ever. It is heartening and necessary to find a practical application of the brotherhood of man and the exchange of ideas among the elite of the world. It is high time that intellectuals stopped being self conscious. We have always needed this fusion of the best of European and American culture. May Decision have a long and prosperous life."

Leila R. Siegel-Subscriber, New York City

"We welcome Decision, the monthly "review of free culture" that was launched with a good deal of ceremony in January from New York. Its editor , some of its editorial advisers, and many contributors are men of letters and artists who have lately left the old world to find freedom in the new. If we think also of the scientists and general scholars who belong to this migration, we must feel that altogether we have now the most brilliant single accession of personnel that has come to the American "culture" in all its history."

Editorial -
Kenyon Review - Spring, 1941.

"I enjoy your magazine : it is full of significant and serious things."

Bruno Walter

"Many people here seem to like Decision...."

Somerset Maugham, writing from Beverly Hills.

"I've read your second issue from cover to cover. My congratulations. It's a swell magazine."

Frederic Prokosh, writing from
Lisbon, Portugal

"The courage and faith of those who have come to America give to us, who are here, new courage. When I read your foreword I said: But this is exactly what I am trying , by much reading and study, to do for myself. May your venture succeed."

H.C.McC. Claremont , Calif.

"Three cheers for Decision !...if enough people read it, I don't see how it can fail. And I believe they will read it, because it possesses (and I was afraid it might not) a basic simplicity, an essential readability, the lack of which is ordinarily a fatal lack in "quality" magazines."

Jean Gould, Toledo , Ohio.

A cable from London, England :

"Decision arrived and has made us very happy stop please send selling copies gratefully confidently fraternally yours

Cyril Connolly Peter Watson Stephen Spender Editors of "Horizon".