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Mann, Klaus

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Klaus Mann

111 East 39 th. Street,

New York City,

January 26 , 1940

Dear Mr. Greenslet,

Here I am again, and it took much longer than I hoped it would.

I assumed, however, you wanted to see a somewhat detailed outline, and you had asked me for a sample chapter. So I had to collect some material and to read many things...

The Duse chapter which I enclose, does not really represent a very good sample. It certainly will have its special place and function within the entire composition of the book; but it scarcely gives the right impression of the character and style the book is going to have. I want to make it very clear to you that the book, as a whole, will be less lyrical and less sentimental than this story of Eleonora's agony. I want the book to have a realistic, occasionally even a satirical touch - which the Duse story lacks, for very obvious reasons. Most of the other chapters - written in a more journalistic, more "documentary" style - will contain much more material about the American experiences of the Distinguished Visitors - while the Duse Monologue gives, perhaps, a sort of resumé of her tragic life, but not very ~~much~~ many details of her American tours. One of my main concerns when I write this book, must be to avoid tiring repetitions. The chapter on Sarah Bernhard, for instance, must be very different from the Duse chapter. Since I intend to quote reviews and letters in the Sarah Bernhard story, I had to find another form for the Duse chapter.

You may notice when you read the outline, that I carefully followed the advise you kindly gave me in your last letter. I excluded such figures as Dickens and Oscar Wilde whose visits already are much-described, and I included personalities like Anbury and Harriet Martineau, both very attractive figures.

I feel it can be an amusing, colourful and human book, I enjoy working on it, and I do so with a great deal of enthusiasm.

It means a lot of work, to be sure. Fortunately I have found a good collaborator - a girl who seems to be a gifted young author by her own right. She does some research work for me in the library and corrects my English style - which sometimes is still very necessary...

The book must not be too short; I think it should have between 300 and 350 pages. Yet I hope to finish it until summer - so that it could be appear in early fall - :provided that I won't be forced to do too much journalistic work beside, while I am working on it. This is an essential problem. There won't be any translator fees involved, this time. However, I have to give a certain percentage ^{of} ~~from~~ everything I get, to the girl who helps me. - - - I wonder what kind of an offer you may be willing to make; how keenly interested you are; how much you like the idea, the outline, the sample.

I expect very eagerly your propositions, your suggestions, your judgement, your reaction.

Yours most sincerely,