

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

Mann, Erika

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March, 27, 1958

Mr. Roger Senhouse
Secker and Warburg
7 John Street
Bloomsbury
London W C 1

Dear Roger,-

shame and disgrace upon me for not having thanked you immediately for THE LAST YEAR. Perhaps you may think me a trifle less guilty when I tell you that I managed to break the far the most important bone contained in, and sustaining my left foot and that, consequently, I have been a cripple for the past eight weeks. A few days from now the plaster of Paris dressing - is that's the right expression - will be removed so that the whole thing may be xrayed all over again and then I'll know whether the whimsical little thing has seen fit to heal properly or whether everything will have to start anew.

Apart from these amenities, however, I have been so involved in my work on the screen play "Buddenbrooks" that all of my correspondence has been wrecked.

None of which, I quite admit should have deterred me from telling you what a lovely job the English edition of my small book turned out to be. Well translated, beautifully printed, attractively done in every respect. Please forward my thanks also to Freddy Warburg as well as to Richard Graves.

I wonder whether - despite of my faulty behaviour - I might be permitted to ask your advice in entirely different matter. As you couldn't possibly know, I never stopped writing children's books ("juveniles") - luckily with a great deal of success. My German publisher alone (Franz Schneider Verlag München) sold 108 000 copies within the last two or three years and I don't really see any reason why these products shouldn't be exported to other countries. Or, rather, the only reason I see (and a most important one it is!) lies in the fact that good old Franz Schneider Verlag have no international connections at all probably because the vast majority of their publications are too utterly German to be appreciated abroad. As you may easily imagine, nothing of the kind applies to my own little efforts. And while none of them would appear unsuitable for consumption in England, it is one particular book which I deem especially suited. Franz Schneider Verlag published the story in four installments (four thin volumes,

that is); but it should be easy to produce the whole thing in two volumes or even in one. The young "heroes" of the narration are boy-singers, the whole choir of them, who having been trained in an ancient and exciting castle, travel extensively, giving concerts all over Europe. Cunningly I thus provide the reader with a fairly comprehensive knowledge of Holland, England, Sweden, France, Italy, Switzerland, etc., without - I think - ever depressing him by the discovery that he is learning while enjoying himself. The "cast", of course, remains the same throughout the story so that in the end every character should have become one of the reader's friends.

So far, so marvellous. But I don't know a single firm in Great Britain specializing in "juveniles". Do you? And if so, would you mind not only telling me about them but also writing them an extremely short introductory note?

Needless to say, I should love to submit the book to Secker and Warburg. But then, I am afraid that you took on A GANG OF TEN as an exception only and are not on the whole interested in that particular branch of "literature".

Many thanks in advance for anything you might be able to do for THE BIRDS OF PASSAGE or THE VAGRANT BIRDS, as the choir is called.

And much love, as ever,

PS. Has THE LAST YEAR not been reviewed at all? I should have thought that at least our old friends Harold Nicholson and Philipp Toynbee (not so old, the latter, but still an old friend!) might have devoted a few lines each to our well-meant publication. Perhaps, there were others, too? At any rate, please do ask your secretarian staff to "lend-lease" me whatever there is. I swear that I'll return it all in perfect health and order.

Once more yours

