120 East 19 St., New York City

August 12, 1921

Mr. Arthur D. Maurice,
95 Harrison St.,
East Orange, N.J.

My dear Mr. Maurice:

I don't wonder at all that the more you think about "The Story of Phohibition in the United States," you should wax - I would not say "wordy and garrulous" but enthusiastic and eloquent.

I am quite sure there is a book in the subject. I am quite sure, too, that any writer of historical bent and social sympathies should be drawn to it. It is a beautiful example of the way that human beings try to improve things in the world, and the mess they often make of it. Frankly, I should love to tackle the job; but there is no use of my thinking about it. I am a slow worker, and if I undertook a thing of this kind it would take me two or three years to really satisfy myself that I had got it right.

You must not for a moment think that it is going to be easy to trace all of the methods, particularly the reprehensible methods, which were employed in bringing about Prohibition. At least, that's the way I feel now. It is a serious piece of work, and I have other things on hand in which I am more interested than I am in that, though I confess that my enthusiasm is easy to fire on anything that concerns the activities of human beings.

I must finish the work that I have on hand. I want to clean off my slate and retire to the country and raise cabbages; and it will never be clean if I run off on some new and engrossing line like this.

No, I cannot undertake it. But you must know, of course, that I am flattered that you and Mr. Brett think I am competent to do it. What you ought to get is some enthusiastic youngster who loves to work sixteen hours a day as I once did, and who has a sense of the dramatic and knows the truth when he sees it, and doesn't ask

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anything better than to chase the truth. You ought to find such in some of the lively young, educated journalists of this or some other town.

I am really sorry, dear Mr. Maurice, that I cannot understand the book, but I cannot.

With many thanks and all good wishes, believe me

Very sincerely yours,