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Letter from
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to
Simonsen, David

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(Cincinnati; Ohio, United States)

Recipient: Simonsen, David

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ISAAC BLOOM, SECRETARY

3600 Wilson Ave.
Cincinnati, Oct. 14, 1918.

Prof. D. Simonson
Copenhagen.

My dear Friend:

Your letter of Sep. 4., always greeted "like cold water upon a thirsty soul" reached me to-day, and I reply at once. If the date is correct the transmission was rather slow, for I had a letter from my boy in France, dated Sep. 10. last week. The outlook at present seems to be for an early peace, and I wonder, whether we shall get used to regular mail delivery, and when it will begin.

Herman thanks you very much for greetings and news. My oldest son is still in the far west in the spruce forests of Washington state, and has won quite a reputation. Two captains disputed on his possession, and so he was promoted to the rank of sergeant. My ~~son's~~ youngest son who had joined the navy was sent home from the training camp, as were other students. They remain in service, subject to call, but continue to study at the university. He is not very happy over it. He would have preferred to fly. My son-in-law is in camp near Chicago, where my daughter can see him every week. My elder daughter is now quite busy, because influenza has become a serious problem. Our college like all schools in the city, theaters, churches and similar places, where people congregate are closed. In our immediate circle, I am glad to say everything has been well, and the latest reports claim a slight improvement of the situation.

The death of my friend Joachim Oppenheim strikes me hard, altho I did expect it for some time. We have been close friends for 37 years. He is probably the last remnant of the old scholarly family who knew what the family traditions meant, and while well-informed, and endowed with a fine mind, never wrote more than an occasional article for a newspaper. I may perhaps write something on the family history, and then, of course, will send it to you. The article on Landau that you saw in the Canadian paper, was translated into Yiddish.

My volume of responsa is half finished, altho it has not gone much beyond sixteenth century, and most of the space is devoted to 18th. The trouble is that the system demanded a translation, and while you have devoted more time and energy and possess a better preparation for it than I, I doubt whether you have any idea of the difficulty which a translation means with these puns, short technical terms that have to be explained and references to older literature which in the original are only briefly indicated, while in the translation they require a whole commentary. Still, I enjoy

the work immensely, whether it deals with the question of drinking coffee before prayer, or with the marriage of a widow whose husband was killed in war, or whether it deals with a dogmatic question of the infallibility of rabbinical veterinary science, or with a case of leprosy. It is a wonderful thing to look at this variety of complications. The greatest difficulty is the selection. It is always with a feeling of apology when I put such a volume out of my hands. There are so many questions of archeology, ethics, dogmatics, history etc. which I have to cut out that I do not believe your library would have done me any good. Indeed I fear ~~it~~ would have made me feel worse. But while speaking of your wonderful collection, what disposition did you make of it "after 120 years", as our Polish friends say? It would be a pity to see it scattered, or placed like Oxford, where only professional librarians can enjoy it.

The war situation interferes with my literary plans also. The third volume of "scrolls" is finished up to p. 127. The printer declares he can not proceed. The difficulties of the labor market and the high price of the paper compel him to stop, altho the delay means certainly also a monetary loss to him. I naturally am very much disappointed. When mail shall become normal I will send you another set of the first two volumes, and if the set, sent before, turns up, give it to someone else. I have meantime heard from our friend Seeligmann in Amsterdam. He refers to two postal cards, written previously which never reached me. I shall keep a copy of the Sep.-Oct. issue of B'nai B'rith News in which I published two essays besides a review of the events of the month, and if you should not have received it, I shall send you clippings from one of my spare copies. I shall also write to Chicago that they supply missing copies to those who desire it after the war shall be over. Let us hope it will be soon.

When I read over what I have written, I find it to be a lot of dry stuff which will mean an imposition on you, and yet there is little of the personal to report. I sent ^{last} Easter my paper on the degeneracy of the Sefardin which has evoked a mild protest on the part of the junior minister of the N.Y. Portuguese congregation, De Sola Pool, himself a much adulterated brand of the aristocracy and married to a daughter of R. Hayyim Hirschensohn, formerly of Jerusalem, for some years in Hoboken, the N.Y. harbor. I sent it to you too.

Hoping and ~~praying~~ that my next letter may be written in a time of which we may say that we remember the evil days as water that has passed,

I am

with kindest regards to you and your dear wife,
yours cordially

G. Deutsch.

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