



Laura Jane Musser and  
family papers.

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40-C-Franklin Ct  
Des Moines Ia



Please forward

Miss Laura Jane Musser  
Hotel Buckingham  
101 W 57th St  
New York N.Y.

Tuesday morning.

Dear Laura Jane:

Only have a little time but wanted to send you the enclosed two editorials from our local paper to show that the world "do move". Am also enclosing a small check for a Christmas gift - would like to have you get a pr. of gloves or anything else you can use - or if you like, you could send to some pet charity - trying to find a suitable gift is difficult - and if in return you want to send a little contribution to Hadassah or any other group, in my name, I would love it.

Do pardon my being so frank - but you said you LIKE it - tee hee. I can't quite figure out whether I made any progress in my defence of parents or not - I like to think I did - could it be that we started out with you on the extreme left, and me on the extreme right, and are now both approaching toward center???? I am willing to start that direction - I don't know how people can overcome the gap of a generation. If it can be overcome at all - but we can try.....

Yes I do miss your typing? Keep Bob's sermons - I am going to try to go down to Houston the Fri before Christmas - haven't been there for 3 yrs and know will enjoy seeing the children's growth - then when I return after N.Y. I am hoping Mr. K will go down too - that way there will always be someone here to answer mail and phone calls, etc.

I got Mrs. Rupp's address from our local library and sent her a card - I do hope that she feels a lot better. Glad to hear you thought well of Ruth's singing at the sorority. Your story about having Marion Anderson as your guest at Met opening is wonderful - I can just see you beaming and happy - you do make a very fine hostess - and it was a very nice thing all around - as to comparing her to Josephine Baker, I almost feel that is an insult - one is a fine person, the other anything else but - - - if you know what I mean - - at least from what I have read about her in the past.

As to the work of Hadassah and Brandeis - and your question which basis, a people or a religion, that is the \$64. question and has been for centuries. I would say that the University is like most of them, sponsored by people of the Jewish religion - it is non-sectarian, has a marvellous faculty, and will some day be one of the finest of the smaller universities in the country. Hadassah is a philanthropic organization, originally organized to help the poor, sick, and orphaned who were migrating to Palestine in small numbers - and of course has grown and grown and now helps to care for the 1000 children, saved from death by being allowed to go there - all are orphans whose parents were killed in the furnaces of the Nazis. The Hadassah Hospital and Nurses training school treats Arabs also - or other groups.

I consider myself an American of the Jewish religion, but there was originally a double tie, that is Jews were of one group who adopted the Jewish religion, and the culture worked out of that, and made it almost a people also - there are many books on this question, and it is an intricate one. As to their being organized, that isn't really so true as it seems. They do organize for charity - that is one of the strongest beliefs of the Jewish faith. You see we have only our own group to draw from, besides contributing to the general good wherever we live - and so since we have to depend on ourselves it has made us more willing to work for those causes.

Students  
1/3 non-Jews  
12 Negroes  
1 Negro  
on faculty

This National Women's Committee for Brandeis, a chapter of which I have started with others, through the request of Louise Lewisohn, is doing very well here - for such a small community, and only 5 wks since the Nat'l pres. was here to be heard, we already have 47 members, including 9 Life members. We are having 2 meetings next week, also.

We get our charter in April or May and will have membership group meetings every month in 1952 till that time as we want to have a large group on the charter list. After that we will only have a membership drive in the autumn - there is no working program, only 2 meetings a year, and no money-raising activities are allowed to be held. In other words it is to get support for the Library at the U, this is the project, and they don't want to interfere with any of the local organizations in any of the cities where they organize. The organization is 3 yrs. old, as old as the U, and is already organized in the larger cities, now beginning to come into the smaller centers. It is a very interesting task, but almost more than I had bargained for. Takes such a great lot of phoning and organizing, but hope by the time I return to have it well enough organized, so that I can turn over most of the work to others and just direct.....

Never thought that at 63 I would undertake a big thing like this, but one never knows. I plan to go to N.Y. in June, and be a delegate to this convention in Boston during that month - don't know when the conference will be. Hope you are still enjoying your business course and all the other advantages of N.Y. and if you go home for Christmas, do have a happy season. My best regards to all your family. Love and Merry Christmas.

Sadie.

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## The Challenge Of Old Habits at S. U. I.

The important thing, as we see it, in the current ruckus at State University of Iowa is not whether the Daily Iowan had a right to delay printing a letter, nor whether the sorority had a right to bar Negroes.

The important thing is that young people on the campus felt strongly enough about the exclusion of fellow students on mere racial grounds to DO something about it.

Two girls made an issue of it. One resigned from the sorority presidency in protest, the other wrote a letter of protest to the Daily Iowan. A whole group of others chipped in to get 1,000 copies of the letter printed.

If racial barriers have started falling it is because individual people all over the country have started giving them a push—mostly young people who refused to accept the defeatist attitude of many of their elders that there was "nothing anyone can do."

The State University of Iowa has been rich in such young people in recent years. They helped the administration ditch its former policy of excluding Negroes from dormitories. They put pressure on the administration to stop asking "race" in application blanks. They put pressure on downtown barber shops and eating houses to stop violating the laws of Iowa by excluding Negroes.

Embarrassing as all this sometimes is for well-meaning people (who were "only doing what everybody has done for years"), it is a very healthy thing. Social customs and administrative regulations, just like statutes and budgets, need constant re-examination in the light of the times and in the light of eternal justice.

Futile Eulogy of C "

# The Des Moines

THE NEWSPAPER IOWA

Published every week  
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## FOUNDED

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## ABOUT AMBASSADORS TO THE VATICAN.

The thousand people who turned up to hear Paul Blanshard in Des Moines last week, the 30,000 people he had spoken to during his present tour, give evidence as to what a hot issue this matter of sending an ambassador to the Vatican is.

Unlike most issues in politics, the thing that really excites people is a question of principle, not the practical aspect of it.

As a practical matter, it doesn't really make much difference. There are some practical advantages in diplomatic contacts with the Vatican, but they don't necessarily require an embassy. There are some practical disadvantages, for that matter, in a lay state having formal relationships with what is essentially a religious organization, but they are minor matters, too.

The chief embarrassment has not even figured in the popular debate, because most people are not aware of it—the custom of the papal representative acting as "doyen" or dean (ceremonial head and chairman) of the "diplomatic corps", especially in Catholic countries.

★ ★ ★

But all these are trivialities compared with the broad issues of principle which the debaters see.

Many objectors see this as singling out one church for special governmental recognition. They regard it, consequently, as a dangerous breach in our traditional separation of church and state.

To many proponents, on the other hand, this is absurd. They can see no reason for objecting except anti-Catholic bias, which they naturally resent. After all, a number of non-Catholic countries do have diplomatic relations with the Vatican, and small though it be, the Vatican state is certainly as important as some other states with which we maintain diplomatic relations.

Official Catholic doctrine considers separation of church and state desirable only as a practical matter, under special circumstances. In principle, the Catholic ideal is close collaboration.

Several American colonies had established churches in 1775, and it was because one of these churches was headed by the King of England that we established our national policy—not the principle of separation so dear to Thomas Jefferson and Roger Williams.

★ ★ ★

While the American idea of separation in principle has spread widely since, here and abroad, many democratic countries with complete religious freedom still have established churches—England, Scotland, Sweden, Pakistan, as well as backward places like Saudi Arabia, Franco's Spain, and Tibet.

It should be possible to believe passionately in the principle of separation of church and state, and still recognize that other positions are possible. It is possible to favor separation and still want diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

The "wall of separation" is a rather new idea, far from universally accepted. It hardly jibes with the motto on our coins, the references to God in the Declaration of Independence and all sorts of proclamations, the chaplains in our armed services and legislatures. Still, those who favor the "wall" are not necessarily bigots, or atheists, or Communists, or unintelligent, or insincere.

In discussing this issue (so relatively unimportant, practically) we have a chance to test our adulthood in arguing matters of high principle with good nature and understanding. There is a wide range of possible positions on it, all of them "American".

40-C-Franklin Ct  
Des Moines Ia



Miss Laura Jane Musser  
Little Falls  
Minn.

Sunday p.m.

Dear Laura Jane:

Your letter at hand and glad you got settled o.k. I got in a week ago Saturday night and had a week of cool weather - but if you think my long rest and vacation gave me any more pep to get back into the routine, you are much mistaken..... Ashamed to admit it, but that's how it is.. You have no need to worry about the tenants in your apt. I gave Hannah a generous tip and she promised to see that everything was all in good order. I left my key at the office that Tuesday a.m. and Ruth left hers the next day, as she had to pick up part of her things on a second trip.

I too hope that Mrs. Rupp will be of great help to Ruth and feel sure Ruth will cooperate - so the future will tell it all. As to your remarks anent Ruth, I always know that it is your friendly interest in her which dictates your opinions, - and while I always hope for improvement, am not counting on it too definitely - what is it they say, the spirit is strong, but the flesh is weak? I know she does try, and so have to be content. Yes I too hope that Barbara and Philippa have a good future - but the way is awfully hard for young musicians of all kinds. No one is waiting for them, and unless of EXCEPTIONAL talent, or a sugar-daddy who foots the bills, the way is long and hard.

Goldman changed Ruth's date with the band at Central Park to Sunday night the 29th of July, as he said they have a bigger crowd then, and it is broadcast over the city radio - and the other one I think the Thursday before in Brooklyn - she had a singing date at Plum Point a resort on the Hudson at Newburg, N.Y. over the 4th and wrote it was beautiful and all too brief a stay. Of course if she has no singing dates for weekends she can always go down to Vera's bay-shore house - she was down the weekend I left and says it is very nice and they can go to the Club near by to swim or dance.

So you were weeding? Well that's a very beneficial exercise, besides improving the lawn - - - sort of double barrelled thing. When I told Mr. Kohn how very considerate, thoughtful and kind you were during my visit with you he said, Well well, Laura Jane's quite a person, and a very good friend I would say - - and of course it was unanimous. Ethel wrote me that Joyce' mother and aunt were leaving last Friday and that the entertaining was so strenuous that it would have had all of them down with exhaustion if it had lasted much longer - takes energy to enjoy oneself too.....

Turned very hot yesterday, and raining again to-day - what a life - slows down the building so badly. Almost forgot - have only the belt left of your blouse to make - then assemble it all together, and presto it will be finished..... Am very happy about it and hope it looks as beautiful as I think it will. Hope you can wear it on your trip to California.....

My best regards to your parents and Alice - have a happy summer and enjoy yourself - have made a note of the book and will read it later. Have the Committee of our Sisterhood on Peace and World Relations, have to get a committee and several Chairmen lined up, as we expect to do a lot of work and enlighten as many of our Sisterhood members as possible. The minute I get a committee, no matter how small and harmless it was before, it swells up and becomes something super - could it be something wrong with me?????

Love,

Sadie.

C. C. Franklin Co  
Des Moines Ia



Miss Laura Jane Musser  
Linden Hill  
Little Falls Minn

Thursday morning.

Dear Laura Jane:

A beautifully sunny morning, 9:15, and waiting to be picked up to go to sewing at Temple. I got a card from Ethel from the lake saying it was extremely beautiful there, but coldish and she was going into L.F. Then I didn't hear again till yesterday when she said she had a fine visit and would give me details when I got to Mpla the end of the month. It was as always very thoughtful and friendly of you to ask her up - too bad you don't have more influence with the weather man - tee hee.

Am enclosing clipping about Bob, thought you might be interested, and won't you drop it into an envelope and address to Ethel - it's the only one I have, and gave you first preference - - - I got his first Bulletin and see their Sunday school will have almost 600 children this year - it's a big congregation and lots of work but he enjoys doing it and I hope his influence, example and teachings will inspire those children and all with whom he comes in contact to be broader-minded, more understanding, and democratic in the finest sense of the word.

Laura I thought of you Tues. nite when I listened to Town Hall discussion of segregated housing. White talked and some woman and a couple senators - when I heard them and saw how completely they were apart in their thinking, how set and hard and unyielding the senator was, I realized why it is so hard for these progressive ideas to penetrate and become common - and that's why it takes so long and it is these leaders and unselfish understanding laymen who have to point the way, patiently, enthusiastically, and yet not becoming discouraged, because this is a long long range project. And I thought of all the discouragement and almost enmity you have met, and want to tell you again not to be discouraged, but keep up the good work, without heat or despair - - a big program, but I know you are equal to it. I am sure all the others are experiencing the same discouragement, but the time will come, maybe not in our time, when this problem will be gradually solved, that is with the majority. There will always be some naturally selfish or greedy people who will encourage and try to spread envy, prejudice and all the other ills which plague humanity.

You might be interested in writing to Town Hall for a copy of this discussion - I think you have to send 10c in stamps.

Our Sisterhood season starts this month and so there will be things to do - I have the Committee on Peace and World Relations, and am trying to do a good job - have a wonderful committee of young women who are much interested.

Otherwise Ruth writes they are coming in town this week and her room at Vera's has been painted in gray and yellow - she will have a large room for herself, hope she enjoys it. She doesn't say yet whether she will go to Mrs. Rupp, but I have been urging it - that's about the best I can do. Mr. K is busy trying to get houses finished, and it's a tough job, but he feels well and tries to keep the irritation under control.

I am VERY busy trying to get the weight off and curves reduced and it is really so difficult for me - guess that tape-worm has been indulged too long. At least when I put on a black dress I hadn't worn

since Spring, I was thrilled to see how much better it looked, the bulge is less around the waist, stomach and hips - so am trying my best to keep it up - - but don't let anyone tell you it is easy.....

I was wondering if you might be down in Mpls during my 10 day visit there - would enjoy seeing you. I go there Friday the 28th, and will stay till Monday Oct. 8th - so let me know ahead and I will save an afternoon for a visit with you. You can answer either here or to Ethel's address if you won't know before I leave.

We've had so much rain and everything looks so beautifully green. I love Autumn and hope we have a nice one this year. Did I tell you that Joyce is expecting another baby in February? And Janice, Ethel's little grand daughter started to kindergarten this year and takes it in her stride - she is a very well poised young lady. Nothing ever ruffles her. Lucky gal.

I hope the blouse got there o.k. And that it fits. Or have you gained at home - it would be a miracle if you didn't with all the good home-cooked food around..... Well honey, hope you have been busy and happy - that's our first duty - Love,

Sadie.

Kohu  
Ho-C. Franklin Ct  
Des Moines Ia



Miss Laura Jane Musser  
Hotel Buckingham  
101 W 57th St  
New York N Y

Wednesday p.m

Dear Laura Jane;

Replying to your letter about my being ill, I am slowly feeling better - seem to tire, but hope to get over that. I notice your remarks about the subject of religion. May I express the thought that the best way to understand religion is to remember that it is supposed to be a way of life, and lead to the greatest good of the soul of man and his treatment of others. Now if everyone were able or willing to live up to the best of religion's teachings, and the best and highest of which each one is capable, - well then it would not be earth but heaven.

I think the easiest way for you to retain your beliefs in religion is to find a church where the minister and his beliefs and talks are the closest in general ideas, beliefs and teachings to your own idea. Otherwise, if you think and study and go about and see and hear self-righteous ministers, biased ministers, narrow-minded ministers, mistaken ministers, and all the great variety, you become so confused and frustrated and disillusioned, because verily if the ministers, the teachers of religion, fall so far short of the understanding of what they are supposed to have mastered - well I know how I have felt in the past at hearing and seeing how

so-called good people think, talk and act, that I have wondered why religion at all? So for your own peace of mind I would suggest that you hang firmly to your own broad beliefs in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and also believe firmly that most of the misguided people are not vicious, merely mistaken or self-righteous. And the vicious ones we cannot deal with anyhow. So steadfast in those beliefs, while you will be observing the same as before, your own reaction will be different. These sights will not hurt you nor penetrate and try to fight your own beliefs. To

always question, to always be hurt and mystified by these inexplicable actions and ideas, is only to hurt your own calmness of spirit and do nothing to change conditions. It is merely an attitude I am trying to suggest you change - however this is only my suggestion in trying to be helpful to you.

Regarding the concert in Little Falls, the main idea I suppose is to have as many tickets sold as possible - and the means for doing that Laura dear, must rest in your hands as only you have the knowledge of your local conditions. As for publicity I think I would stress the Lemonade Opera, the modern songs, etc. I am sure Ruth will cooperate in talking this over with you.

Regarding your sentence on the envelope about a Feb. date for St. Louis, as I wrote you previously, Ruth has changed her plans for coming out here then so this too you will have to take up with her.

Alec Templeton's agent's wife sounds like a good person for Ruth to meet. As to the Naumberg award, since Ruth has made her debut, she would not be eligible for this. As to JWB, they are NOT agents, Laura. They are a service organization, primarily for service to the various Community Centers in the organization. They compile a list of hundreds of lecturers, artists, etc. that they think the Centers might like to use, they arrange a circle tour to save the Centers on transportation charges, etc. But they do NOT push any one artist. The

year Ruth won the award, they did push her, but they do NOT have too much influence, and besides they do not have the means or personell to push so many people. They only charge 12-1/2% commission, up to last year it was only 10% -

As a matter of fact, if there were enough business doing Jewish programs, there would be agents handling them - the field is too limited and I want Ruth to get out of it and into the general field if at all possible. As to Max Leavitt, Ruth says you can't PUSH him, if he does decide to do anything, it will be when he himself gets GOOD and READY. He knew enough when Ruth was given that job as the Witch with the Little Symphony, to accuse her of disloyalty and lacking in feeling, because she did NOT try to get jobs there also for the Hansel and Gretel of the Lem Op - but now, when he could do something for Ruth, he is taking his sweet time about it - and I don't know if he will ever do anything.

That's been Ruth's ~~good~~ <sup>bad</sup> fortune - that no one has taken enough interest in her to try to do something for her - and especially has she never had any interested person, who really was in position to get her an interested listener. *audition where it might help.*

Now Laura dear, before we go any further, one thing I want to make clear. I am not expecting you to do anything in particular, and if you are not successful, please do not feel that I will feel you have fallen down. It is merely that I feel you are a willing and loyal friend, you have the time, and you are interested in music also. So whatever you can do I will appreciate more than I can say, so please know that is how I feel - I would hate to think that this request of mine would become a burden to you or cause you any feeling of MUST about it.....

As to Ruth's going into her silent spells, honey nothing can be done about it - when she doesn't agree, rather than talk it out, she shuts up - she does it with me frequently and I have learned to let her alone. Sometimes she hurts her own interests by doing it, but she's a big girl now, so if that's how she wants it, nothing can be done. For instance I have never told her that I have asked you to see what you can do because I do not know whether she would like it?????

Now referring to your letter in response to my "business" letter, honey you are wonderful - such a prompt reply, and so warm and peppy - I chose better than I knew - thanks so much. And as to your being frank, that's alright with me, and I will be likewise, as I usually am. Nice that our ideas coincide. I didn't even know that Ruth didn't audition for Dorati, when in Mpls, she didn't ever tell me - and I think you are right to let it go as is.....

As to Madam Boghetti, I don't exactly know what happened. This is in strict confidence - Ruth did tell me that B isn't the teacher that Sten is - but if ~~Ruth~~ <sup>she</sup> thought ~~she~~ <sup>he</sup> was inadequate at that time, maybe she was right - I think that her voice is much improved now, and if she doesn't get some good contacts this year, it will be too bad - there is such a thing as going stale. She may see Boghetti again - I know what a Christmas card came here for her from B. I think too that Mr. Gianinni might be very helpful - Confidentially, Ruth says every time she auditions she just falls on her face - lack of self-confidence I suppose, but she is so much better this year, maybe this won't effect her so much. At any rate I think it is about time that she got hold of herself - and of course the more she auditions, the less nervous she should get, I hope...

#3.

I understand fully all the difficulties involved in getting at and to people - and I too feel that Ruth should cooperate all she can - you might tell her that I asked you to do this, and that you are trying to help ME out, - maybe that will sit better on her - I wouldn't know. At any rate, have a good time out of the efforts anyhow - that's the least you are entitled to.

I feel when you give your mind to it, you will think of angles yourself - I still think T.V. should be a good bet - and the Women's Club angle, if a good agent could be shown that she is Extra Good - believe me Laura J, our local club is a very big one, and they pay very large fees, and they have had few artists even as good as Ruth - and I am NOT wearing my rose-colored glasses..... In fact they are broken! tee hee!

Well I am sitting back so peacefully knowing I have a very eager, courageous and enthusiastic representative in the great metropolis, doing all she can to help - yum yum is it ever a wonderful feeling - I'm likely to be very spoiled.....

Lots of love and thanks for everything.

Sadie F. Kohn.

Kohn  
400 - Franklin Ct  
Des Moines Ia



Hold

Miss Laura Jane Musser  
Hotel Buckingham  
101 W 57th St  
New York N Y

May I extend a welcome in abstentia to you to OUR New York? Greetings.

Monday night.

Dear Laura Jane:

Thanks for your letter - I think it is better that you can come here on your way home in the Spring when it will be easier to get out and the temperature and nature more inviting - so have a fine 3 months in little old N.Y. and say hello to Broadway for me.

When my sister returned home from here she evidently frightened Howard and Joyce with her stories about how low I felt, and Joyce came down Sat. a.m. and stayed till this noon to see for herself how I was. Since Mrs. K. had left, I had really turned a new leaf and decided that I was foolish to let anything get me down, and had already recovered my spirits, so Joyce and I enjoyed a nice visit. She went shopping with me this forenoon and I bought a beautiful new gray suit, and ordered a sunset-pink 3/4 length Spring coat - so the old gal is sprucing up a bit.....

I think the idea of publicizing Ruth's concert ahead of time is fine - our letters evidently crossed, as I had written I thought the large hall would be o.k. As to what to say about Ruth and also regarding the "friendship" angle, etc. I think it would be advisable to consult with her and get all the ideas and material from her and you can add what you wish to it. Your story about the good-will meeting and the pastor's wife being so careless in her acknowledgements of credit due, is so typical - what do they say, when a man is killed intentionally, it is murder - when accidentally it is only manslaughter - the penalty is different, but the man is just as dead in both cases..... I don't think I would stress in your publicity, the Jewish angle at all.....

Ruth will probably tell you that she has postponed her visit to Carleton since nothing else materialized at that date, and she could not afford to come out west for one concert so she will combine whatever she gets in late April and early May. Lots of love and thanks. Sadie F. Kohn.

Ruth writes you called her New Year's and we both think it was so thoughtful of you. Ethel Katz also wrote of your invitation for her and her husband to go to the symphony in Mpls but they both had the flu - a different form than mine was.

Because I know how much you liked our Robert's sermon on the Symphony of Life, I am enclosing the writeup from their Temple Bulletin I got to-day - isn't this flattering? Would seem your judgement is very good, Miss Musser - - how can one so young and so fair, also be so smart?????

Our rabbi's fame is spreading! In October the Bulletin mentioned that another of Rabbi Robert I. Kahn's sermons had appeared in the Houston Press's "Favorite Sermons" department.

Entitled, "Man's Life is a Great Symphony," it was read by James Petrillo who had it reprinted in the INTERNATIONAL MUSICIAN, magazine of his musician's union.

There it was read by Herman Weil, head of the Department of Education and Psychology at Wisconsin State Teachers College who wrote George Carmak, editor of the Press, for permission to reprint it.

Professor Weil wrote that he had read Rabbi Kahn's sermon to the State of Wisconsin Teachers Convention in Milwaukee, and to his class in Human Relations.

"Within the last few days", Prof. Weil's letter reported, "there has been an increasing demand on the part of many professional and lay people to get a reprint of this sermon. I am therefore asking for your permission to have this sermon mimeographed and to make it available to the many persons who have requested it".

WRITING

Kohn  
40 - @ - Franklin Ct  
Des Moines Ia



Miss Laura Jane Musser  
Linden Hill  
Little Falls Minn

Wednesday p.m.

Dear Laura Jane:

Want to get at your several letters, so will begin by answering the last one of 12/28. Am very happy you like the smock - hope it isn't too large - the pattern ~~xxxxxx~~ isn't printed any more, and what I had was a size 14, so enlarged it considerably - I thought it a very cheery garment and hope you always feel gay when you wear it.

I see you wrote the Christian Herald about the clipping - well it can't do any harm, even if it doesn't do any good. I wish, Laura dear, that when some question on religion on which you would like my opinion, comes up, you would jot it down in your notebook, and save till we meet again - these questions take rather lengthy and sometimes involved explanations. Did you happen to hear Town Hall last night? Billy Graham, the evangelist, and Dr. Sockman, who wrote the Beatitudes which you had in D.M. with you. The question, Is there need for the Old Time Religion - I thought Dr. S expressed himself very well.

The idea of Graham, that man is sinful, and has to be saved through Jesus, is very repugnant to me - and as Dr. S said, he doesn't believe that all we have to do is accept Jesus and be happy - we have to live for others and help others - - - this too we can discuss when we meet. So put down the notes, snookey. I don't know whether Ruth sent that Rose Geranium soap from N.Y. or not - there are so many things I ask Ruth about, that she doesn't answer that I never expect any outside facts to seep in..... I don't know when she is planning to leave. You will probably see her when you get to N.Y. and I foretell that N.Y. is going to look very good to you after your long absence. It does have its points, and many of them.

Max Leavitt, who always used to complain that he never got any publicity from Lemonade writeups, is certainly getting them now. Ruth sent me a fine clipping from the Sunday Mirror, and says he was on the intermission panel, between acts of the opera, a couple Saturdays ago - and which I didn't get to hear - she says he acquitted himself very ably.

Now to the next letter in reverse order. I see you refer to my visit in the Spring - completely unexpected, was my sister and her husband's visit to us over this last weekend - I wasn't really physically able to have them, but didn't get her note till Thursday, and just didn't have the will power to say no - it was hard on me, but we did enjoy it. She tells me she is going to go up to visit you too when Ruth gives her concert in L.F. Will that ever be an Old Home Week - the Mussers will certainly be surrounded with Kahns and Katzes all over their hair - tee hee - so you see what happens when you just throw around your invitations thither and yon - SOME people, and I think you know who I mean, just take those invitations seriously and ACCEPT. Will you ever be sorry????

Oh I see I was mistaken - the above was letter #3 - instead of #2. Now I proceed to #2..... Am so glad you had such a happy Christmas - and that so many remembered you - I don't see why they shouldn't - you are always so thoughtful and generous - Yes that old dogma that You have to be a Catholic to be saved - or you have to be a Christian to be saved - or as my mother has always believed, The Jews are God's chosen people, etc. Why isn't it enough to feel that our own beliefs are as good as the best - and that we are all indeed children of God?,,,,, There have been these converted Jews here to preach and I never went - but the next time I am going to

attend and see what they say - this idea of converting the jews may be in 1 or 2 cases, really a genuine good desire - but mostly I feel it is an easy way of making a living..... Also we can discuss - tee hee.

Regarding your remarks about Ruth being too impatient about the lighting system - while Ruth is not ever a gusher, in the first place I am sure she was tactful about it - she wanted it fixed I suppose, if possible - ( I haven't heard anything in details about her Little F or Duluth program, so am just conjecturing). And as to her being Cold, the fact that you didn't notice it is proof to me that it isn't true, because you seem to be one person who does not look at Ruth and her work through rose-colored glasses, but rather objectively. It may be that the person or persons who spoke to you, were expecting too much fuss to be made about them.....

I think for your publicity you could stress that this is the MODERN type of concert, intimate, personal, etc. Really Laura Jane, I feel you are plenty capable - so I feel rather silly trying to give you suggestions in this particular matter. However I would suggest that you don't mention the above remarks to Ruth - I am sure she would feel hurt. I am sure too that in your home town in particular, she would be doing her utmost in every particular, to be tactful, courteous and pleasant..... For your sake in particular.....

As to the small hall, if Thebom could sing to a large hall that was quite empty, it wouldn't hurt Ruth - maybe the Kohns and Katzes could be so noisy that it would seem like a larger crowd!!!!!! I always appreciate the nice things you say about my sister and about me - but honey, you must remember that when you are one of a minority, you are forced to think, and become more sensitive and aware, both mentally, spiritually and emotionally - - I would not be willing to insist that were I one of the majority, I would ponder on the injustice, intolerance, anti-semitism, etc. I might - - but - - - Which is why Laura Jane, I find you so different and so broad in your understanding, your sensitivity and your sympathy for the down trodden, the people discriminated against, and in fact so aware of all the hypocrisy, intolerance, etc..... You're a pretty swell person - and with you too, while you are probably originally bent that way, I am sure that your physical handicap forced you also to think things out..... So there was that much benefit - it was a great price to pay - - but you could have turned bitter, mean and selfish too..... So God be praised that it turned the other direction.

The people that Ruth had in Duluth are Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Karon, 2117 E. 2d St. Duluth, Minn. I imagine the midnight service was very beautiful and impressive - why couldn't the minister have kept still?????

Snookie there is still another letter dated Dec. 12th - in which you say this has been your very best year - and we are so happy for you. I hope honey that all the years to come will be as happy and as satisfying to you - you are deserving of it - and now that your inner adjustment has been made, I feel that the years ahead will be good to you. I am particularly pleased that your efforts to help Ruth, have also brought you happiness and satisfaction. It is wonderful to have such a double reward for your efforts. I am going to write you a separate letter a "business" one, in which I want to give you my ideas of what you can undertake in N.Y. if you wish, for Ruth - and that is to get contacts as many as possible for auditions so that she can get an agent and get out of this frustrated and difficult siege - transfer completely to the non-Jewish field, and really get started. I hope that after I have

#2.

outlined my ideas etc. that you may agree enough to want to undertake being my representative, since I cannot go there - I feel you are in a particularly good situation to get loads of information, contacts and facts which would be closed to Ruth looking for HERSELF, and even to me, looking for my DAUGHTER. But you, being an outsider, could I feel sure, command a lot of respect and cooperation. At any rate, if you would be willing to spend some time on it, I feel quite sure you would get good results - you are very well fitted for this sort of thing I am sure. So will be writing you in a day or two.

Am very glad you enjoyed Ruth's stay in Little Falls and also in DULUTH - I am surprised that you liked the Jewish songs best, but expected you to. Did she write you that they want a repeat performance still this year? She was quite flattered, and so am I - because they are a small group and they did pay her a nice fee. Am very glad you like Ruth's knit dress - I thought it looked very nice on her - she has a nice figure for it, if she would keep the fat trimmed off - - I always feel so disappointed that she does not realize what a beautiful figure nature gave her, and cherish it and keep it down..... But I know how hard it is, food being so good 'n everything. I know that this Mrs. Flor isn't very good, but it seemed the easiest way out. I don't know whether she is going to use her again or not. In reply to your inquiry about the dance song that Ruth did in Duluth, I don't know - you'll have to ask her in N.Y.

I note your remarks about how hard you try to overcome your sensitiveness - keep trying, - there are many people who make rude and cutting remarks, some really are petty and do it intentionally - others are confused by the distressing conditions to-day all over the world, and don't know what they say - and others are just ignorant or not tactful - but as we both know, They can't hurt you if you won't let them - so I hope that for the New Year this is one of your BIGGEST resolutions.

It's sort of sweet, if childish, Truman's letter to the music critic - it assumes big importance because he happens to be president. I read a reprint in our local paper, saying that the Truman ladies have certainly behaved with decorum. As to Marg Tr she is certainly reaping a golden harvest through being HIS daughter - her singing, since she studied with Traubel, who tried to make a colartura (spelling terrible) out of her - and she's really a mezzo - so they took away what she had, and gave her nothing else. Her middle register used to be fair - now it's rotten, and the upper one is bad too - - well, she can still make money.....

Your remarks about how appreciative the little country school children were of your efforts reminds me that it is much better to be poor than too rich - the appetite becomes jaded - when a child has to go without so many things, then what they do have is treasured. I was raised in a home with a very limited income, and I know that there is such a thing as "too much" - too many toys - too many clothes - too much excitement - too much food - etc. etc. Not that I don't like what money will buy - but being poor isn't ALL bad..... Hope you understand what I mean.....

Loads of love and best wishes for the new year to you and your parents.

*Sadie Z Kohn*



Miss Laura Jane Musser  
Linden Hill  
Little Falls, Minn

Thursday morning.

Dear Laura Jane:

My sister and 5 yr. old Janice spent 10 days here, and while the apartment was very crowded and a hectic time had by all, it was really enjoyable. Janice is a darling little girl, beautiful, sweet and quiet - but under that exterior is a mind sharp as a razor, and an inflexible will - it was queer seeing it operate. She avoids all arguments - it seems to be a natural quality, and a very wonderful one. To give a simple example. Eth took her to call on a very old friend, who is in bad shape physically, etc. Naturally it was boring to J but she didn't say I want to go home, I'm tired, or I haven't anything to do, as most children would - no indeed - that smart little cookie said, I'm so lonesome for my Auntie Sadie, - I want to see my auntie Sadie - and so the friend complimented her on being so fond of her aunt Sadie, and they left - - - it's really uncanny.....

Gotten quite hot, and I don't like it, but the crops do need it, so am suffering patiently, but not silently. Am leaving for the sewing group at 9:30 and thought I would start this, and maybe finish when I get back. Regarding Bob's sermons, I think if you wait till mid-September, or early, and write him direct, naming the sermons you want, he could supply you. At present they are all at some resort, in a cottage - am sure the 3 children will have a good time, but wouldn't swear to the parents'.....

The project of a Church Library of Choral Music is a very constructive and worthy one - and if this is how you are going to demonstrate your value and knowledge, all power to you. To use one own's ability and training for the benefit of others is always rewarding to all concerned. I realize the drawbacks of being a member of the First family of one's town, but honey, as I told you, all virtues have their drawbacks - and you can't separate them. And if you concentrate your thinking on the drawbacks, then you can't even balance things up by fully enjoying the benefits.

So be smart - concentrate on the advantages in your thinking, and soft-pedal the drawbacks - real though they are, why emphasize them in your thinking. I think your dad could tactfully tell mother not to stay in the rut of thinking or saying that you are not a mature individual in your own right. I am sure she would not knowingly do or say anything that might embarrass you - it's hard to shake loose from our thinking rut. And this new development and maturity which has come to you in the past couple years is rather new to them..... I am sure it is going to work out very satisfactorily, especially if you handle it with finesse and dignity, which I know you can so well do if you THINK with your HEAD and not with your EMOTIONS????

I told you the reason that Mary seems more agreeable to her, it's the sameness of their likes and ideas - so cheer up, snookey - we can't all be alike, and we probably wouldn't want to - it would get awfully tiresome!!!!!!

Otherwise, I had expected to ask Hd and family to drive down here over the Labor Day weekend, but Eth suggested it would surely be much easier for them, and save them 2 days driving out of their weekend, if I offered to come up there the Thursday before, and take care of Naomi, while they went off alone to some nearby resort for the weekend. So I have done so and am awaiting their reply.

Been hearing from Ruth fairly regularly - she got worn out with the standing at that Schraft job - and V's woman got sick out at the cottage on the Shore, so she offered Ruth the same pay as at Schrafts, and her meals, - with Wed. off to come in town, and any weekend off that she got a singing date for. So it ought to work out o.k. Or at least it will be cool out there. And some cooking experience for Ruth. HHope the results aren't too bad.

Nothing else new around here - am hoping we have a cool spell before long. Have a good time and be happy. Regards to the family.

Love, Sadie.

40-C Franklin Ct  
Des Moines Ia



1145

T  
Miss Laura J Musser  
#1145- Biltmore Hotel  
43d + Vanderbilt  
New York NY

Wednesday morning.

Dear Laura Jane:

Hi-Ho Blow the man down, - - - Was I ever AMAZED to hear from you from New York - sort of wish I were there with you - we did have such good times in June..... Maybe they forwarded the letter I wrote you last week telling I was going up to Mpls and asking you to come down for an afternoon if convenient.....

Am so happy the blouse fits and you like it - it should be very becoming as to color and style - really just your type..... Hope you get lots of wear from it and much pleasure - was glad to contribute my time and ability..... Couldn't do it for a nicer person.

Yes I can imagine it is a chore to have Mary and the children visiting and coming in and out in a household where people are long unaccustomed to children - no matter how much one loves them..... There is a limit to endurance as one gets older. Am very sorry to hear of your mother's condition - it is tragic that old age has to have these complications where nothing at all can be done about it.

Sad too to hear your father's health is failing, but no one can complain about his having been so well and alert and robust up to his age - very unusual and you have all been fortunate. I think his suggestion of your taking a business course is a very good one and hope you do - I know you will enjoy it and with your good mind it won't be too hard. As to whether in N.Y. or Mpls, is something only you can decide.

I don't feel that you can be happy in L.F. for permanent residence under present conditions, first the unhappy memories of the past that come up to plague you, and second, the old pattern that has become routine with the family and which is probably impossible to change, even though YOU have changed and developed so much. I feel sure your getting along better with Mary is YOUR changing, not hers, and am glad about it. Hope it continues to work harmoniously - there is no point in having it otherwise. In other words, Laura dear, you must practice all the time until it becomes an unconscious habit, to THINK with your mind instead of with your emotions - and that means you can remain calm and not heated.

Regarding your brother-in-law, what you fail to understand is that in trying to get all the interest and advantage he can from the family wealth, he is only acting as any man NORMALLY would. You are so generous, fair and honest, that you do NOT realize fully how the normal person reacts. And as to your thinking that Mary would be depressed or unhappy about it, I think you will find that she will feel he is being a very fine husband and father to consider their interests above YOURS. Can't you see that?

I agree that he is certainly being unfair to try to belittle you to help his own future, but since you now know this, the smartest thing is to stop feeling angry with him or have anything against him. Just try to protect your own future so neither he nor anyone else can harm it. In other words, concentrate on Protecting Yourself, instead of wasting energy being peeved at him..... Be smart.

As to the future, I think your father must have long ago made his arrangements for the future of the business, and other interests, and since I too think you should know what these arrangements might be

I might suggest that maybe talking to his lawyer and asking him to advise your father to talk with you, might help - seems to me that the attorney would think it advisable. In talking with him you don't need to mention anyone, simply that you are interested in knowing that your dad has made such arrangements that no one who might be running the business would be in position to jeopardize your interests. Seems that would not be unreasonable on your part.

Very few men would leave the management of their business to a daughter, even if she were experienced - men just don't think of women as business equals, so that shouldn't cause you too much concern. At any rate, I hope my suggestions may be helpful to you. You know whether I agree with you or not, I am at all times interested in your welfare and if anything I can tell you or advise you is helpful, will feel satisfied.

Otherwise we are having very beautiful autumn weather just now and my husband is busy trying to get three houses ready for occupancy as soon as possible - and also to finish the others he has already started - it is a stiff routine but he seems to be taking it fairly well. Am sorry I too cannot be visiting with Ruth - I am watching the gymn class over in the schoolyard (girls) go through some kicking routines, and they look so happy and vigorous - too bad we don't appreciate youth till it is gone. I hope the weather will be nice in Mpls while I am there. Am anxious to see Naomi, Ethel says she is developing so fast.

Have been cutting down on food, have lost about 2 inches around my waist and hips, and am persevering, but it's awfully tough on my disposition - I'm just frustrated and hungry - tee hee - what women won't do for vanity - - -

Have a good time and give N.Y. my regards. Love,

Sadie.