

30 April 1847

[Letter from Simeon Locke Doggett to Samuel] Mendon Last day April 1847

Dear Brother

I embrace this opportunity to perform what duty & ~~filial~~ affection prompts. What I deem is but a shadow of those genuine feelings & expressions which can only be seen & heard by being face to face -- I might indeed plead guilty of neglect were it impossible to implicate you in the same -- This observation will doubly revive in your recollection the promise you made in yours of Dec. 30th to write soon again ~~ff~~ In expectation of it I have waited in suspense & therefore the apology I will make for writing is that as the labors of spring have commenced I think it proper ~~to break~~ for me to assume the right of breaking the unpleasant silence existing between us lest it should thro' necessity on my part continue much longer -- The following are the words contained in your letter "Pardon me & I will soon again make amends for this sin, both of omission and commission by improving some future opportunity in writing you, my dear Mother, whose letter remains still unanswered. I will write you again soon, & dilate upon subjects congenial to your feelings" I hope you will remember this promise & during the meantime I will remember how your time is absorbed with your laborious avocation of school keeping & studying of law -- not to say anything about the indispensable amusements of the festive scene -- no I would not insinuate that they should be dispensed with "for life's ne'er the worst for't as your merry friend of the German moralist ~~observer~~ kitzenwinger observes

But is man whether in the festive scene in costly apparel in gorgeous palaces or the battlefield -- Now I declare since I have mentioned the word battle field I cannot refrain from turning our attention towards Mexico the seat of war where all eyes are fixed intently the battle of V.C. is a glorious achievement over Santa Anna. Gen. Taylor deserves the highest commendation ~~I XXXX~~ & obscure as I am feel to him I further more hope that with the fall of VC it may terminate the war -- For who that loves his country can wish this war to continue or who that has any humanity is not distress when he contemplates the slaughtered heaps of the dying & the dead "Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness, some boundless contiguity of shade, Where rumor of oppression & deceit, of unsuccessful or successful war, Might never reach me more. My ear is pained My soul is sick with every day's report Of wrong and outrage with which earth is filled. &c"

But to return to my former disquisition I would ask if in the festive Hall with all its gaiety on the field of battle with all the pomp & circumstance of glorious war -- if anyone can obtain the perfect happiness for which all are searching Do not all like Rasselas find that there is no happiness in sublunary things

For my part I feel some time like the clown under the oak but I suppress such a disposition & resort to some learned Author for instruction & advice -- If he be Pope then I learn by his precepts that whatever is, is right which I think is quite an encouragement to villiany & slavery especially when he adds that all partial evil is universal good -- . If Paley I discover design in everything created -- If Addison I see the follies & peculiarity of man -- If Milton I deplore with tearful eyes the fall of man that fatal act that brought death in the world & all our woe -- I find no relief or consolation among them all but feel more discontented as I pore over their pages -- I then resort to history of past ages. Here I like to rove & search into the proceedings of the ancients & ~~then~~ view their excellencies & then look down with honest

contempt on the wealth blown insects of modern times who are neither ennobled by true greatness nor virtue. Cesar Cicero Socrates & Leonardo! great & glorious men. When I read of the first I would I were a warrior with the lordly plume bending o'er my brow the glittering sword in my hand & authority in my every look -- The second makes me wish to be an Orator whose eloquence can make a nation tremble -- The 3rd melts me down into a philanthropist teaching precepts of virtue to all mankind & the next fills me with patriotism stirs my brain & I would grasp a sword fatal to myself & every Mexican foe -- but alas "the boast of heraldry the pomp of power, All that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave, Alike await the inevitable hour" The paths of Glory lead but to the grave.

Thus it is & thus it will be & the only relief to mortal is the Bible there we find our consolation & the hope of everlasting salvation. -- [?] We must bear the trials of life & endure to the end Even sickness altho' a punishment of our own making is never theless a trial & as Mr pope observes inspires us with thoughts of the future better than a thousand volumes of philosophers & devines.

When I reflect I see pope 251

But must here close hoping that you will forgive all inaccuracies as I write in great haste

-- I wish you health Peace Prosperity &&

Farewell Dear Brother farewell

S.L.D.

S.W. Doggett , Jacksonvile.