

about 30 Mar 1848

[Letter from Simeon Locke Doggett to his brother, probably Samuel]
undated but between last day of spring
and March 30th 1848

Dear Brother

Your elegant impressive affectionate and superior letter has been duly received.

Its reception has aroused within me emotion pure and genuine -- It has displayed as often displayed your characteristic traits of nobleness of soul, generosity of heart and profundity of thought -- It has furnished a fit subject for my most serious consideration and a lesson for me solemnly to consider advice from observation and experience which I grateful receive.

It induces me to say that "there is not a more pleasing exercise of the mind than gratitude. It is accompanied with so great inward satisfaction that the duty is sufficiently rewarded by the performance. It is not like the practice of many other virtues, difficult and painful, but attended with so much pleasure, that were there no positive command which enjoined it, nor any recompense laid up for it hereafter, a generous mind would indulge in it, for the natural gratification it affords.

You return me such a definite ans. which comingles so with my own conviction that I fear as I advance in years I will lose all relish for sublunary profits and honors and take as much pleasure in affliction and misery as in earthly joys and comforts.

When searching in to the dark profundity of the past or expending the present or contemplating the future when "joy and grief and hope and fear alternate triumph in my breast" when all the emotions of kindred and of love, of poverty and adversity of consolation and dejection and the alloyed state of this life its follies hallucinations and depravities the cupidity of man his virtues hung round with his frailties his every act the harbinger of good or of evil his responsibility and ability to perform when all the affections of many life pop before my view I consider all as vanity and vexation of spirit all as the inevitable lot of man and what occurred to those now dead & will to those who yet shall live Montgomery's verses are beautiful on this sub.

----- As the rolling sun guides his fiery chariot through the [?] the ethereal vault first by his refulgent beam vanishes the silver lights of night or removes them all to earth and bids them rest upon the verdant green until he in a mist desolves them into air and then continues his blazing journey through the meridian sky making earth feel the maturity of his morning beams and then having fulfilled his purpose down his western course he turns and when about to bid farewell to earth his gentle beams creep up to our lips [?] from thence to tree tops next to lofty spires and mountain summits gives us all a parting kiss then blushing in the clouds resigns his charge to night: So doth man arise filled with youthful emotions and pleasing, anticipations which like the dews of the morning all desolve into air

Then comes the most useful part of his life which though sometime obscured by a cloud by some unfortunate hallucination like the sun withereth the object he was intended to bless yet performs his purpose and then when he departs if he dies a good man he leaves something dearer than a kiss on every countenance and smiles forever in the sky

Thus as one day resembles another so doth the (life) man who lived in the days of babel resemble the man of today and he who lives him who shall ~~live~~ in years of futurity when man shall the mountains move & by steam and found an empire in moon and all that shall remain of him his Epitaph
How loved, how valued, once avails the not

Oh mortal how canst thou live in thy depravity -- Death and eternity are at hand every moment is shortening thy span bringing thee nearer the brink of where thou shalt be plunged into the immensity of space and time -- O death thou "lord of the human soil" "insatiate archer" thou wast begot of sin and sin by the prince of hell at thy birth all hell resounded! It is only the hope of mastering thy sting that keeps me from despair. -- O my dear Brother hope that you have somewhat condemned of all passions most befriends us here passion of proud & name befriend us less" "&c

Shakespeare calls it our staff walk hence with that and manage it against despairing thoughts" that the "miserable have no other medicine but only hope" also that true hope * * * see the Day

When our lever is too short and the fulcrum too distant from its object it is the hope of exchanging it for a better than induces us to ply the uncouth thing until we can grasp one of the first kind which though tho it may require more time and space for its operations yet has the advantage and power desired -- It is the hope of seeing you that render your absence supportable! hope befriends us more than friends for what are friends like? The Earth which in revolving round the powerful king of day nears by distance vast that mighty orb is when nearest coldest and when thus by the natural ~~of the~~ effect of things one would undoubtedly infer that the earth moving in a spheroidal ecliptic would ~~would~~ when approximating the ~~earth~~ sun produce a greater degree of heat but in fact occurs during the bleak moments of Dec. &c So friends when appearing warmest are coldest and when professing the greatest affection are like poisons hid in cups of nectar.

Lord Ramer [?] observes that the difficulty is not so great to die for a friend as to find one worth dying for!

And Tully exposes to all who wish to profit by instruction this this most excellent advice "A man should live with his enemy in such a manner, as might leave him room to become his friend, and with his friend in such a manner, that if he become his enemy, it should not be in his power to hurt him

By such an exercise of discretion life accompanied with other virtues life would be relieved of many sorrows and few occasions would arise to oblige us to burst forth in such bitter reflections as those of Byron's -- I know not of ever reading such a seemingly just yet wicked reproach as that except in Milton Paradise lost -- see Milton's par. Lost BX 740th line

But when did adam make his complaint? after he had tasted the joys of Eden after he had been warned of the inevitable result that to taste the forbidden fruit would bring death in to the world ~~with~~ all our woe with loss of Eden

The terms when offered to him at the very time of the proposal should have been either rejected or accepted and as he chose the latter and thus brought upon himself all the subsequent joys and sorrows all the blame devolves on him

The other argument of adam and Cain that God created them without their leave is an absurdity -- When you are married first consider well then ask your son's permission before you give him life if you may bring him into the world -- impossibility -- But your Son born -- what if he prove disobedient and you reprove him and he retorts 'wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not. would you admit for his contempt of you that proud excuse? yet him not Your election, but natural necessity begot

God made us of his chose his own, and of his own to serve him our reward was of his grace over punishment then justly is at his will His doom is fair that dust we are and shall to dust return Therefore we should seek after those commodities and gather those treasures which neither moth nor rust doth currupt which will ease this life along and secure that life of joy that never ends. If I can never taste that soul-delighting joy that saints and Christian have yet got all the wealth of [?]ormus or of And will ever induce me to barter my soul for gold or speak disrespectfully of the mysteries of Godlines

I think it well not to venture too far in the flood lest it be as difficult to come back as to wade over. In these days the reason of many persons can be so stupefied and perverted was to make the wrong appear to them the right. As the moon when in greatest opposition to the sun shines the brightest so their false opinions appear brightest to them when they are in the greatest opposition to God

[I realize the above is on occasion garbled and can only infer that Simeon was greatly fatigued during the effort of copying. I have kept his errors and repetitions faithfully though his meaning seems clear throughout most of the rolling periods. Certainly the hobby of quoting from great works was endemic among even poor farmers, armed with Milton and the Word of God. Twentieth Century farmers should be so addicted! There is no signature here, but the next page is in different ink and quite a different MS, evidently having to do with Simeon's hopes for a position as school master. MNK]