

(to Aristides)

1851

Letter from Simeon Lock Doggett,

1851

from Mendon, Mass.

Dear Cousin,

I embrace the opportunity to answer your letter, dated the 28th of May. I shall endeavor to advert to those things which you have noticed, and mention any other thing that may be interesting or amusing to you.

Perhaps I am not in that mood of mind in which I ought to be when I take up my pen to write to my Dear Aristides, but I know that your own good nature will freely make an allowance for what one might be induced to write in the hour of anxiety or regret. In the first place I must acknowledge my thankfulness for your kind letter & desire you to remember that I fain would answer it, not with the reluctance of aversion, of ~~affection~~ but with the alacrity of true affection.

I had anticipated the purport of part of your letter, for the accounts which I have read in the papers, of an expedition fitting out in Jacksonville against Cuba, apprized me that the excitement was in your midst, and your known Martial spirit induced me to believe that you were deeply engaged in the affair. -- I am very sorry that the expedition has been frustrated, but all is not lost that is delayed. A great objection to the annexation of Cuba besides that of slavery, is that the people speak a foreign language -- they are spaniards. I am in favor of annexation. This is a distinctive feature in the democratic creed. The democrats have always argued & voted for the extension of the Union and the Whigs have generally opposed the admission of new States. Daniel Webster in his late speech at Buffalo expressed his opinion, the opinion of the whole whig party, in time past, and at present. "That it was not in the original scope or design of the constitution to admit new states out of foreign territory." He said I never would consent that there should be one foot of slave territory beyond what the old thirteen states had at the time of the formation of the Union." That is because Louisiana, Florida, Texas, and other territories happened to contain slaves. Mr. Webster would not consent to the admission of them, and even as to Cal. Mr. Webster has said, -- "I voted against the acquisition. I wanted none of her (Mexico's) territory, California, New Mexico, nor Utah". Hence it may be seen that he is opposed to the admission of States, slave, or free. This is the old federal platform, under it the country would have languished and perhaps would have been dissolved. But the the [sic] democrats have stood & conquered on the more generous principle the extension of Liberty. By reason of the magnanimous course the country has grown and prospered and has already become the most powerful and most glorious nation that is, or ever has been on the face of the Earth. But enough of this -- You observed "that you are happy in learning that I had received intelligence of your Cousin Samuel" I received a communication from him on the 21 ult. He writes of success with him unfavorably, yet the generous soul sent his father, at his father's urgent request \$250,00. It appears that you entertain the wish of visiting the North, I am glad to hear this. But as far as this place (Mendon) is concerned, there is little that is attractive,

especially to anyone that is a Doggett, for the Doggett name has always been held in particular odium in this despicable town, and the prospect is that it will be as long as it is remembered. But those of this name who have lived in this town, have been fortunate in one important respect, that they owned the land on which they stood; and thus were enabled to withstand the assaults of ignorance and prejudice. The Esprit De Corps of the people here is now more strongly adverse to this family than ever, but let it pass unnoticed as the idle wind. For what will it avail a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? I tell you what it is, if some contentious sordid hypocrite would learn more and think more of eschatology, they would see what dust they are, and to what corruption & damnation they will come. I wish you great success in your proposed profession. In regard to Medical schools, any that I could refer you to would perhaps be equally expensive. For celebrity, none stand higher in this country than the one in Philadelphia, where your Uncle Perez Doggett studied. It appears to me, that you might make an arrangement with your uncle Perez, F[?] Doggett of Wareham Mass. to learn the profession of him. I only mention this. [sic]

And now to turn the subject upon myself, I would observe that I enjoy tolerable health, for which I am grateful, and for the continuance of which I pray. I suppose that you are aware that this is a busy season among farmer[s] here, for it is in this month that they gather the hay crop which is of paramount importance in New England. Hence it would seem almost preposterous to some to be writing now, but nevertheless I am so engaged in writing this and three or four others, one to my Sister Julia, who is married and resides in Royalston Mass., one to my Sister Malvina, who lives in Holliston, and one to xxxx lastly my brother Samuel. By the way, I have just received three letters from him, highly interesting to me and his kindred. He has met with but indifferent success. He sent me specimens of the "Dust" Virgin gold, gold in (auriform) quartz, & quartz crystallogid. Allow me to quote this passage "But I see so much Sickness, sorrow is suffering &c." See letter, Date May 1, '51

But I must draw this letter to a close. I wish that you and yours may may [sic] enjoy health and prosperity, that no disappointment be found in your path, nor grief upon your countenance [sic]

I remain as ever
To Aristides Doggett Jacksonville Florida. Your Cousin Simeon L. Doggett