

C June 1850

[p. 74 ff of Simeon Locke Doggett's ledger, after April 26th, 1850, before Aug. 20]

The Dreaded Individual

I come when no one thought that I would come
And suddenly appear within the doomed
Because intemperate city and corrupt.
Now terrified and like that Ninevah
Of olden times repentant and in tears,
Weeping and wailing heard within her doors
And all her bells as morn and eve resound,
(Her hills and heights repeating back the sound)
With the knell that tells of dissolution,
And in her streets the slow processions move
With lingering steps and measured, onward
To the still, the incommunicative tomb
Here lordly rich I send to their abode
And these the indigent with equal speed,
One laid beneath the sod in fun'ral pomp
The other cast into some outward pit.
The frightened and the nocent feel their guilt
And speedily desert the city now condemned
They thronging to the steamboat and the car
With anxious hearts and fearful fly the spot
Here death they think awaits them if they stay
But in this they err, to their destruction
For my arm can stretch across the oceans --
The continents across; and ravage too at once
The sunny south, the frozen regions north
Also indifferently my ruthless hand
I lay upon the old and hoary head
Upon the strength of manhoods prime, the gay
And happy spriteliness of youthful years
And on the tender infants fragile frame.
Nor care I who is blessed by fortune's hand
Who sunk in poverty who cursed with crimes
Nor care I who is beautiful and fair
Nor who is happy in his earthly sphere.
Alike I them destroy, to death consign
Alike they hate me, when their conduct they should curse.
For never came I, till they made me come
And seldom harm I those, who are not harmed
Harmed by their own inordinate desires
Obnoxious made by what obnoxious is.
Him who is viciously inclined I seized
Him who is given up to liquors fierce
That enervate the body, and subvert
The base on which his health alone depends
Who thinks the while he drinks that he defends
Himself from my assaults, -- but foolish man
Poor fool, he helps me on with double rage
To separate his soul from flesh debased
And send him unprepared to hear his doom.

Those who luxurious live, & gorge themselves
With rich high seasoned fare, and riot much
While industry in weeping attitude
Or struggling in despair unpitied starves,
Them I destroy. And all who careless are
Of health, the best of gifts, the greatest boon
Those who are fearful trusting not in God
I pity little; -- but the libidinous
The cursed that makes the land and all accursed
I dispatch them quick that quickly they may go
To their own place like Judas did of old
So have I been as heretofore I went
O'er all the longitude, and latitude
Of this Opaque, Opaque with wickedness.
So am I now in distant unknown climes
Where the inhabitant I daily slay
And threaten with destruction those abroad
So will I be in future where I come
To sweep the earth of those who now deride
And unrepentant hardened are in heart
Hardened tho' having 'scaped a sudden death
Incorrigible as Pharaoh was
Like his their actions will but seal their fate.
O God I am thy servant, under thy controle
I am thy vengeance on the nations poured
I am thy scourge ordained for wicked men
Thy besom that sweeps away the filth of earth
Thy constable that bears away the bad
And sometimes am ordained to take the good
But the intemperate I mostly seize
And easily they fall when them I strike
And now I warn them and all such to change
Their immoderate habits, and prepare
For the certain time when again I come
To chastise man for insobriety
Then if from vices they have not refrained
Unpitied I will send the to their wo
Coward Hearted, O'er Long Eaters, Rummies, All
(For the above initials write my name,)
Who are debased by passions that are base,
With ruthless from hence I will remove.

S.L.D. Pensivius

[the riddle is CHOLERA]