

Copied

New Jackson (Mississippi)

July 1. 1828. —

Dear Sir: Not having been in Jackson for more than four months, and seldom sending there, I did not receive your letter of the 9th May, until some time after its date. I think it well enough that you have returned home. A married man cannot well absent himself for any length of time. The anxiety he feels to see his family, will retard his progress in his studies. The experience you have had abroad, will now enable you to study to more advantage at home. You have an excellent collection of books, and you have only to make good use of them.

You doubtless wish to know my situation and views. I came home in December last, went to Jackson in February, and took a thundering fever. Since then I have continued quiescent at home, acting the farmer in a lazy way. I have made up my mind to continue steadily at home about two years. Unpleasant as my situation here sometimes is, it is better than travelling about without any fixed object in view. —

I have for the present thrown aside the idea of practising law, and relinquished every ambitious aspiration. My only object is now to recover peace of mind, and that self-respect which I have lost in my career of dissipation. - Had a fair field for honourable emulation been open to me, I have never doubted that I could become an entirely reformed man. I could have distinguished myself, I could have made my friends proud of me. But almost every hope is cut off; and I now see more clearly than ever ~~than ever~~ that indulgence in the social glass (under feelings of disappointment) will prove my destruction. I have determined therefore to keep steadily at home and to refrain from company. As to spirits, I have touched none since February last, although I have had repeated opportunities. The time once was (only a few years back) when I would have shuddered at the name of a drunkard - I would have chosen death rather than be one; but the evil has come on by degrees, and although I would sometimes vainly persuade myself that I am not quite that odious character, yet upon reflection

Verily, I cannot disguise from myself that
I have deserved the disgusting appellation. —
I have a sanguine temperament, naturally, —
a disposition which loves to dwell upon
the bright rather than upon the dark side
of things, yet the prospect before me has
so little of promise in it, that I feel at times
exceedingly unhappy. And you may be
sure that feeling is not in the least alleviated
when I reflect that it has ^{been} principally brought on,
though certainly not altogether by my own
folly. —

Write to me soon, and give me the
news of the nation in full.

Sincerely yours

J. S. McDonald.

W. P. P. Pitchlynn. }
Choctaw Nation. }

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J. C. Alderson
July 9th

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Capt. P. P. Pitchlynn,
near the
Choctaw Agency,
Mississippi.

1828.
J. S. McDowell
Mississippi