

1818

20: 1818 September 1: William Dunbar "Son" (Princeton) to Mrs. William Dunbar "Dearest Mother" (Forest, Natchez)

William Dunbar

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Dated: 2th May 1817

My Dearest Mother

Since my last to you, about three weeks ago, I have received two letters from you within one week. The second relieved me ^{very} much with regard to the information you gave in the first with respect to Mr P's health, tho' nevertheless I am still in ^a very great anxiety about him. I agree with you most heartily on the subject of Dr J's practice; how absurd & ridiculous it appears to make man sick ^{because} ~~rather~~ has seem'd to be getting well; perhaps perhaps took its rise among certain quacks whose interest it was to keep their patients down as long as possible that they might pay so many more visits & thereby make their pockets heavier. It is the Dr's thought that he could perceive a typhoid pulse or some other symptom of an approaching prostration of strength or that nature having exhausted herself in unavailing efforts to throw off the disease, had at length resign'd herself to its quietus.

I remember he used to have a great many little theories of this kind, which however often interfer'd with that great & important ^{one} thing by Dr Rush, "the State of the System" which ought always to be kept in view, & which you will agree with me, he did not regard in Mr P's case. Don't suppose mamma that to be saucy about Dr J. No one can be more sensible

my own ignorance & inexperience; but I need not ~~be~~ be afraid
to say any thing to you who are my mother. In any very im-
portant case I would sooner depend upon Her as young as I
I have observed that young Physicians who have been however some
time in the practice, have one advantage over the very old ones, tho'
they may not have the experience; it is this, that they will exchange
an old opinion for a new one if it be a better one; whereas the
old ones are in general biassed with regard to their own notions &
set their eyes against the clearest light. I am extremely anxious
to hear from home again that I may be released from suspense
concerning Mr. P. & that I may know whether he has set out for
any part of the world, which I anticipate will be of great ad-
vantage to him. Both his state & your own troubles seem
exceedingly unhappy, they absolutely grieve upon my spirits & in-
deed to get on with my Studies I am obliged to do all in my
power to drive them from my mind, tho' I do not succeed very well.
To finish my Studies before next year is absolutely impossible. Even
then I shall not have been engaged in my profession as long as the
Law requires, however nobody is aware of that but Dr.
Physick who will say nothing about it. I have already put down
my name as a Candidate for the next Spring (at which time only
Honours are ever given out) & fortunately the Dean of the
made no enquiry, or I might have been tempted to tell him

a stay - I am much rejoiced to hear that all things have be-
-come smooth with regard to Helen & Mrs H. & I am certain it
was all owing to your happy way of managing these affairs. My
own affair is going on as usual. At the commencement of the be-
-sieg, I did not know but it might ^{be} a considerable time before
we were married; as she was quite young & as the friends might
have wished her to remain with them as long as possible. This it
was that first gave me the idea of returning home before I married &
afterwards it was strengthened by other considerations. However I
she is quite willing to go next year & in fact would not be
I should go very far from her. You furnish a secret reason
motion for my wishing to come home as a bachelor, viz
that I wanted to flourish among the girls: when I was at
home however, I gave you a fine specimen of my fondness for fl-
-ourishing among the girls! - You say also that you suspect I con-
-sider this business very shocking & dull, since I got your consent
to my marriage so easily. All this might have really been the case
if I were about 16 or 17 years of age; I am afraid mamma you
don't recollect that I am 24 years of age & past all such ro-
-mantic nonsense. Only let me be proposed of the woman I love
& I shall be perfectly happy, tho' I may meet with no obstacle at all
in gaining her. All the Fieldites desire to be remembered to you in
an affectionate manner. Annie says I must give you her best love &
tell you that from your affectionate remembrance to her, she will not
be inclined to consider you all as strangers, but as friends who deserve her
-ut gratitude & love. - Give my love to the boys, Helen &
some of them I must write to very shortly ^{your affec^{to} son}
William

now my dear mother it must be a difficult thing to write to a stranger
before but suppose that I would think hard of it if you did not write
It is just as well and maybe better to send a message occasionally.

19
MAY
F

Mr. William Dantons

Forest

Natchez

Miss M. Dantons