

Tallahassee Jun. 14th 1865

Dear Genl.

I send a small piece of vaccine virus the last fragment of a pure scab and some quinine. Harry says you wish to hear from me and at the risk of banishing this desire never to be revisited I will write a few words – Words must compose the epistle for never before were my thoughts & mind in such [a] confused state. The life passed during the last four years was preferable for this hope had not deserted us as completely as now. However I endeavour to accept fully the issue now nearly made up, and while the past is forever gone, & the present as dark as midnight for the sake of others, to make a future. Day by day the conviction is fashioned upon me that an exodus from this country is necessary [for] me. Having belonged to the party that preferred principle to property I presume I shall always be obnoxious alike to the union man and our conquerors and therefore indulge the hope that the day may arrive when I can give place to a better man. For the present I have a permit to practice medicine in the state of Florida during good behavior – a rather useless act of grace judging from the preference given to those gentlemen whose devotion to self and community prevented their continuing in the field. I hope by fall to collect out of the remnant of what now looks like a huge fortune enough to [word repeated] carry me somewhere. I care but little where. After all it may be well that we be forced to leave this state, for it is doubtful if a worse curse could be entailed upon our children than being raised in this climate. Nobody has a definite plan, for who can see one day of light out of the chaotic darkness upon us. Our town you know abounds in military of various colors and is I believe in points of population increasing; as many families of color and doubtless future distinctions have become dissatisfied with country life and crowd to the city for the advantages of schools & churches.

Occasionally in walking the streets you meet a pale visaged person whose angry discontented countenance induce[s] you to stop to console, but upon inquire [inquiry] as to the cause of trouble you find that he has always been a good union man and detested secession, but now his Negroes are gone and he unfeelingly denounces the best government under the sun. Ah! Could a touch of the emotions we are all taught to believe sometimes, enter the great Leader of this world, the Devil, infuse itself in my bosom. I greatly fear the consolation of force partakes of his humane nature. Could hatred be excellent for another [?] class, I think that man who now only alone regrets the loss of property should have his full portion. There are many such among us. There are others on the other hand who look if not cheerful at least resigned in fate; for they say they are not disappointed in the present state of affairs, as four years ago in their opinion it could not be averted save by a successful appeal to the power of armies. Now that this has been tried and they have fully done their part, they are satisfied at least with themselves and with resignation determine[d] to submit to the present.

Beard you know makes the best of everything and manages to be in favor with at least one U.S. officer who will let a friend purchase one gallon. [Illegible] being [Illegible] quarter. I am in much need of this [illegible] deserved after all.

I wish you would repeat you[r] visit to this place and be my guest. I can take care care [word repeated] of man & beast and we can talk in full over future plans. A trip will do you good.

Genl. Newton takes charge of this part of Florida.

Give my regards to Mrs. Anderson & B. and the boys. I have written certainly a number of words and altho uninteresting I do not think one word has been said that does not become a legal citizen of our government.

Very truly yr friend,
C. B. Gamble

Transcribed by Christopher A. Baker, University of Florida, 2008.