

New York, August 6, 1843.

Brother Josiah,

My long-remembered and still cherished friend; yours of July 18, was received by me at the New York post office about a week ago. The hardships and embarrassments of life, which sometimes will not allow us the command of our own time, have prevented my answering it till this hour. Of course I could not turn away from the post office steps till I had read it, and when I did turn away, my eyes were wet. The first single line of your letter was more than a volume for me to read — "Thirty years ago you and I were frequent correspondents" — How quick and how vivid, long and happy years came up before me, and called upon me to read over their records. Thirty years ago — Ah, the whole picture is all before me — we were bright and happy boys then, buoyant with life and hope, and just reaching after manhood — In summer listening to the teachings of good master Cushman at Bridgeton Academy, and in winter taking our time "to teach the young idea how to shoot," at the head of some village or district school. That old academic hall in the 3d story of that tall, heavy, barn-looking building; those pleasant companions who used to climb the long stairway with us, and join us in our lessons; the bright pond below us, and the pleasant sails we had upon it; the walk

New York, August 6, 1843

Brother Josiah,

My long remembered and still cherished friend; yours of July 18 was received by me at the New York post office about a week ago. The hardships and embarrassments of life, which sometimes will not allow us the command of our own time, have prevented my answering it till this hour. Of course I could not turn away from the post office steps till I had read it, and when I did turn away, my eyes were wet. The first single line of your letter was more than a volume for me to read -- "Thirty years ago you and I were frequent correspondents" — How quick and how vivid, long and happy years came up before me, and called upon me to read over their records. Thirty years ago — Ah, the whole picture is all before me — we were bright and happy boys then, buoyant with life and hope, and just reaching after manhood — In summer listening to the teachings of good master Cushman at Bridgeton Academy, and in winter taking our time "to teach the young idea how to shoot" at the head of some village or district school. That old academic hall in the 3d story of that tall, heavy, barn-looking building; those pleasant companions who used to climb the long stairway with us, and join us in our lessons; the bright pond below us, and the pleasant sails we had upon it; the walks

Contributed to Maine Memory Network by an individual through
Maine Historical Society
Date: August 6, 1843
Description: Seba Smith to Josiah Pierce

in the groves and over the hills; and then the winter scenes in our district schools, especially the time I passed at your father's house — Oh, this "memory of joys that are past," is indeed music that is pleasant, but mournful to the soul.

"You and I were then frequent correspondents," yes, and it is but a very few weeks ago that I was reading over some of that correspondence one evening to my little boys, who seemed to enjoy ^{it} almost as much as we did in the day of it. But, 'thirty years;' how quick they have gone — I have just turned to some of the records of those days, ~~those days~~, that still lie among my papers — In my address to our academic companions at Bridgeton, when we separated to go to College, I notice this quotation,

"So passes our youth like a smile,
Or a breeze among the odors of spring,
It wantons and sports for awhile,
Then dies like a dove on the wing."

But I must not indulge in the reflections that crowd upon me, for they would fill a volume, when I have but the space of a single page to reply to your letter. It would give me much pleasure to meet with our college classmates at their quarter century meeting, if my circumstances were such as to enable me to do so; but alas, they are not. I am still suffering under pecuniary embarrassments that have been pressing upon me for three or four years past, and the

in the groves and over the hills; and then the winter scenes in our district schools, especially the time I passed at your father's house — Oh, this "memory of joys that are past," is indeed music that is pleasant, but mournful to the soul.

"You and I were then frequent correspondents:" yes, and it is but a very few weeks ago that I was reading over some of that correspondence one evening to my little boys,

it

who seemed to enjoy [^] almost as much as we did in the day of it. But, 'thirty years;' how quick they have gone — I have just turned to some of the records of those days ~~those days~~, that still lie among my papers — In my address to our academic companions at Bridgeton, when we separated to go to College, I notice this quotation;

"So passes our youth like a smile,
Or a breeze 'mong the odors of spring,
It wantons and sports for awhile,
Then dies like a dove on the wing."

But I must not indulge in the reflections that crowd upon me, for they would fill a volume, when I have but the space of a single page to reply to your letter. It would give me much pleasure to meet with our college classmates at their quarter century meeting, if my circumstances were such as to enable me to do so; but alas, they are not. I am still suffering under pecuniary embarrassments that have been pressing upon me for three or four years past, and the

young magazine which I have just taken hold of, the "Rover," at present requires a great deal of my attention. I should be willing to make a great effort to go and meet you all, if it were practicable. I am glad so many of the class can meet on the occasion. Please present such as you may see, with my kind regards and cherished remembrance, and my best wishes for their individual happiness and usefulness through life.

You say you have six children, three sons and three daughters, and that your oldest son is a member of Bowdoin College. We have six children, all sons, but our two oldest are in the high school with the angels, and four still remain with us.

I reciprocate heartily and sincerely all the kind feelings expressed in your letter, and should be as glad to see you and any of your family here, as you could possibly be to see us at Gorham. A letter from you at any time would give ^{me} much pleasure. Why not renew the correspondence of our youth? To me I think it would scatter a pleasant light along the dark pathway of life as I descend toward the valley—

Your old friend and classmate,
Seba Smith.

young magazine which I have just taken hold of, the "Rover," at present requires a great deal of my attention. I should be willing to make a great effort to go and meet you all, if it were practicable.

I am glad so many of the class can meet on the occasion. Please present such as you may see, my kind regards and cherished remembrance, and my best wishes for their individual happiness and usefulness through life.

You say you have six children, three sons and three daughters, and that your oldest son is a member of Bowdoin College. We have six children, all sons, but our two oldest are in the high school with the angels, and four still remain with us.

I reciprocate heartily and sincerely all the kind feelings expressed in your letter, and should be as glad to see you and any of your family here, as you could possibly be to see us at Gorham. A letter from

me

you at any time would give ^ much pleasure. Why not renew the correspondence of our youth? To me, I think it would scatter a pleasant light along the dark pathway of life as I descend toward the valley—

Your old friend and classmate
Seba Smith.