

**Text of the following letter written to Susan Barbour Rodman
by her father
Thomas Throckmorton Barbour**

Ione Valley December 2, 1859

My Dear Susan,

My letter of Sept. 3rd to Doctor Rodman will have told you - if received - that I was living, acting, and planing, which was about the sum of what a letter to you would have told, had I written one, of which is my apology for not answering sooner yours of the 21st of June. For some time past, I have been quite indisposed and for the last three weeks, have suffered greatly with neuralgia over my eyes, and am still so afflicted, though, in a milder form. By this you will learn that I am still living, and acting, and too, executing my plans with strong hopes of success: surrounded and blessed with this world's goods, so far at least, as eating, sleeping, raisement of shelter and the good opinion of the community in which I live can contribute. This however, I deem a negative, rather that a positive, lively, hapiness and but few things can impair this tranquillity, so long as my children and wife, are respected and happy, and I have in their affections; and yet, I hope under an individual delinquency my philosophy would still sustain me. It has been wisely and truly said, that as the vexations parents receive from their children hasten the appearance age, and double the weight of years, so the comforts they reap from them are balm to all other sorrows and disappoint the injuries of time. Then that balm is mine and with one, the injuries of time are disappointment. I rejoiced boast in the rectitude of my children and their devoted affection.

A letter from Lucy E written since Louisa left them, freighted with good news, breathing the most tender affection and expression of warm filial gratitude, was joyfully welcome.

A letter from Rebecca dated the 16th of July was seasoned with too much pepper and salt to be palatable Her asperities were based upon a strangely perverted construction of a letter of mine. My reply was mild and dicorous of course, since which, I have received three letters & in their succession, her asperites have gradually mitigated until a butter of kind feeling is manifested and an apparent equilibrium restored. I wrote her by the last steamer enclosing her a draft for \$200 and then promised a draft to Sidney from Edmund's which you will find enclosed. As I intended to write to you by this steamer I had it drawn in your favor. You will please collect and give it to her in Edmund's name.

Your response touching the information asked for in my letter preceding yours, was not as full as wished and expected, but probably at full as you deemed it discreet, and may be, assuming the axiom that "ignorance is bliss"! Then be it so, and for your good intention you have my thanks.

I am now closely and intently engaged in preparing sixty acres of land for a vineyard, to be planted the present winter. I have fine hands, employed at thirty dollars per month each, and one at forty dollars per month, and therefore, every moment of the day demands my presence. My land is paid for, also my team consisting of two yokes of oxen, which is required to break the land, my house too is built, furnished and paid for and occupied, not by myself but my hands. It is situated about one mile from where I now live. You will perceive that a heavy outlay is before me, which will be a dead expenditure for or until the third year, but it will not embarrass me; yet, strict economy will be required. My selection of land is thought by experienced grape growers to be admirably adapted for the purpose. I send herewith to Dr. Rodman the California culturist, the treatise on grapes and wine may interest him. My axiom is :

"The wise and active conquer difficulties by daring to attempt them; sloth and folly shiver and shrink at sights of toil and _____, and make the impossibility they fear".

I learn that the steamer is in, but the mast has not reached us, I anxiously expect letters from some of you. and if none come, will be sadly disappointed. Tell Dr. Rodman to put himself to no inconvenience in arranging and settling my business which he has so kindly undertaken. My engagement is such that I cannot without great sacrifice leave here this winter, which, I am not yet able to make after this year, the half of each succeeding year during my ability to travel, will be spent in KY. It is a pleasing thought to have a comfortable house in Frankfort and a plantation in California and what a source of pride and self congratulation would it afford to writings and know, that tender and affectionate tears were shed for me even twice a year; tears of regret at parting, and tears of joy at meeting and how can I so effectually excite and gratify this pride as to have a duplicate of homes thousands of miles apart, and one in the midst of those who love me; but should there be no tears, how then would the account stand, it would be over balanced with disappointment of mortification; well, all I can do is to stand the chances. I have not seen William since the 23rd of September and yet on the 24th of October I passed of within bow-shot of him. I was returning from San Francisco and he was going down. So being unconscious of our proximity, we had as well have been a thousand miles apart. He left however, a letter for me at Sacramento in substance that he wished to see me, but I could not wait I had to hurry home to receive and pay for my oxen by previous arrangement. I have thoughts of a correspondence with Willie to consist of remarkable sayings of the great, wise and good; such as - "religion is the best answer in the world, but the worst clock" - "Most is like a river, the deeper it is, the less noise it makes" "The Christian ministry is the worst of all trades but the best of all professions". What do you think of it . My love to all the children and kind regards to your husband.

Your fond father,

Thomas T. Barbour