

Letters to my neighbor No. I.

Who is my neighbor?

To John Smith Esq.

Luke X. 29-

My dear Sir:

Before

entitling my letter to you, I felt called upon to be read with some care, that portion of the Holy Scripture, wherein the Lord ~~commanded~~ spoke to his disciples these remarkable words "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

— and, as I have thought upon its significance the inquiry of the speculation ^{lawyer} ~~bystander~~ has sprung to my lips and I have asked —

"Who is my neighbor?"

The parable which follows, as if in reply, seems to shed no light upon the matter at all. It is, of course, easy enough to say who was the neighbor of that poor devil, who fell among the thorns. ~~but~~ My littlest boy John (a diminutive ^{masculine} of seven summers

~~summers~~, and more given to
 large mouthfuls of cracklin-
 bread and 'Quimmon beer, then
 to scriptural exegesis, seems to
 be entirely clear upon this point.
 When I read over the parable
 again, with great solemnity, and
 addressed the final interrogatory
 to him, he first wiped his nasal
 promontory and his sleeve together,
 and an anxious smile parted
 "the ruby curtains of his mouth
 disclosing the process of oration=
 tion, ^{in full blast without} as he replied

"The feller that put grease and
 stickin'-plaster on his sores and
 paid his tavern-bill, of course!"

I reprimanded the youngster duly, for
^{the} his improper levity and peculiar-
 ity of his expression, and deplored

the degeneracy of these modern times, deeply regretting those good old ~~times~~ ^{days} when infant masculinity put on gentleness with its first pair of bifurcations.

I ~~could~~ called to the young dog's attention, the example of his country's paternal ancestor, the exemplary George, who in his tender years measured out with such strict propriety those immortal sentences,

"Father! I can't tell a lie!"
G.W. aged 10 years.

As a father, you may imagine how I was shocked to hear the incurable young scapegrace exclaim -

"Golly, Pap, don't you 'spos he told a whopper then!"

~~was~~ with inexpressible

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currow, not without an admixture of anger, I turned away, knowing that reproach ^{would be visited} upon a child of so little sensibility - I certainly wonder how he can have acquired such coarseness of manner and speech. I have taken the utmost pains both with his morals and ^{his} diction yet both seem to be ^{rapidly} becoming deplorable - I have an idea, Mr Smith, that association with your ^{boy} ~~son~~ Isaac does not tend to improve them -

But John went off and I fell to meditating upon his ^{eyes} and ^{thought} there was something of philosophy in it. Favors conferred evidently constituted the distinguishing feature

of the neighborhood between
the Samaritan, and the un-
fortunate individual who fell
into Larcenious society during
his attempted progression from
Jerusalem to Jericho - Even that
young blackguard John declared
that to be "as clear as ^{and} soap"
however clear that may be.

I illustrate

for instance

Do too with
namesake

your illustrious
John Smith of "Samaritan" (I adopt
this orthography because the custom
of the country should govern the
pronunciation and I wish my
~~enough~~ readers to pronounce cor-
^{rectly} besides I am satisfied that the usage of the
mother country, where we should look for
his proper relations to the very
"English civilized" justifies this pronunciation)
distinguished ancestress of so many
of "the proud sons of Virginia." I
do not think however, that your name

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Osaka had very carefully con- sidered this parable. If he had, he could never have for- gotten the moment when that wild flower of the wood, the fragrance of whose loving devotion comes to us sweet and pure despite the mold and must of ~~continuous time~~ ^{time}, cast herself upon his bosom on the block of sacrifice, twined her brown arms about his neck, and made her beauty and her love the shield of his life. He would ever have remembered that ho- liest neighborship which this peerless act ^{should have} established between them, whereby the life which she had re- deemed from destruction should have

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been consecrated to her service,
in that new life which ~~opens~~
~~from her love~~, when born again
through the fervency of her love,
she cast aside the avengery
of her sires, and adorned herself
with the amaranthine of his people
and his religion. She saved him
from the sacrificial block to be-
come herself a sacrifice to one
more cunning, selfish and more-
hunting than the heathen Powhatan.
I hope Mr. Smith, it is no offence,
~~(John Smith of Pocompton)~~
but I consider your name sake
to have been a thorough scoundrel
and not fit to have been any-
body's neighbor - It is true
did have decency enough not to
work the ruin of ~~the~~ poor Lou-
wain, whose devotion was more price-
less than all the fancied wealth of that
Greek which he sought; when there
would have been to his war-worn
hulk a poor penniless ~~friend~~ ^{girl}

of youth, crowning his
last years with a beauty and
a glory which those before
had never known. But
John Smith, of that ilk, was a
gentleman because, com-
manding one of His Majesty's letters
of marque, and possessing,
I suppose, not a little of that
pride of birth and station and
perhaps ~~some of that~~ ^{something of that} ~~was~~ ^{ambition}
ions to preserve those "distinctions"
on account of color" which
her descendants so strenuously
insist upon in theory, and so
studiously ignore in practice -

Instead of being neighborly he put
in a substitute, a milk-and-water
"goodly" sort of man, as near as
I could ever learn, to fill the a-

ching will ⁸ on the hearts of
the young forest princes, and
mock the burning love which
all death's terrors could not
dissent. Gun ammesaki, Gun
Smith, ought not to have found
any neighbors when he fell in
among thorns. And in my
opinion Mr. King Powhattan, ought
to have beaten out his brains be-
fore Poohahontas had an op-
portunity to become infatuated
with him

What, ^{ever} therefore favor has been
conferred, and it is easy enough to
determine who is the neighbor of the
recipient, but how about the
donor? Who is his neighbor?

But here undoubtedly, the Master
 intended that we should apply
 another ~~principle of our~~ beautiful
 principle of ~~our~~ His word, the bless-
 edness of giving. The relationship of
 neighbor, so far as it arises from
 the actual conferment of obli-
 gation, is mutual. As the Good Sa-
 maritan became the "neighbor" of
 the unfortunate traveller to Jericho,
 by reason of his kindly act,
 so did the victim of the thieves
 become the "neighbor" of the Sa-
 maritan, because, "It is more
 blessed to give than to receive"
 and so, throughout the world the
 mutual obligation of neighborship
 exists, wherever favor is conferred,
 between donor and recipient
 between lender and borrower
 between ²debtor and ¹creditor
 between obligor and oblige, is

- I - "Who is my neighbor?"
- II - "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."
- III - "His hedges were broken down"
- IV - "A journal of doves being &c"
- V - The "Glorious" of Lebanon.
- VI - "No horn, no corn."

Prepare thy work without, and
 make it fit for thyself in the
 field, and afterwards build
 thy house - Prov. XXIV. 27

"I went by the vineyard of the cloth-
 feel &c, Prov 24-30 & say -

Let thy garments be always white and
 let thy head lack no ointment, Prov.
 Eccl. 9:8

If the iron be blunt and he do not whet
 the edge then much he put forth more
 strength - Eccl. X. 10

The labor of the foolish weaneth
 every one of them because he know-
 eth not how to go to the city - Eccl. X 15

See the observer with the wind shall not sow
 and he that sows with the clouds shall not reap -
 XI. 4

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as the lawyers phrase it,
in innumerable relations ~~and~~
~~tending~~ through labyrinthine mazes
of human ~~thought~~ action, thought
and feeling, extends that frail
but certain clue that guides to
truth and right; the ~~mutuality~~
of neighborhood. Like a silver
net-work it stretches from man to man
binding one at every intersection of its
^{gleaming} threads.

But how, you wish to know, does
every
this broad definition of neighborhood?
allow me to ^{as to} ~~write~~ ^{indite to you} ~~then~~ ^{letter?} ~~write~~
down of address? You wish that no mu-
tualities of obligation exists between us: that
you are not my debtor and are glad
that I am not yours. So am I neighbor
for I have no idea that you would be
an obliging creditor, and my house
would soon be more easily distin-
guished by the mortgage upon it than
by its present new coat of paint.
But to lay ^{that} ~~that~~ aside, do you think there
was no obligation incurred, no neigh-
borship established when I turned that
infamous row of yours thirteen times
out of my "crack" field of wheat

without shooting her, and that too, when she had sealed a fence which I regarded as impassable by any fera domestica, ^{and was} known to jump feet and buttocks ~~which I had built~~ ~~just inside of~~ ~~my~~ ~~eyes~~ ~~every~~ ~~cornfield~~ ~~within~~ ~~a~~ ~~space~~ ~~of~~ ~~ten~~ ~~miles~~ ~~from~~ ~~your~~ ~~door~~ ~~—~~ ~~“muck”~~ ~~both~~ ~~one~~ ~~and~~ ~~held~~ ~~in~~ ~~half~~ — How I remember ~~seeing~~ ~~from~~ ~~my~~ ~~chamber~~ ~~window~~, when the wheat was just ripening under the fervid summer sun, one sultry morning when every servant on the plantation was beyond hail, seeing from my chamber window that porcine she devil (you will excuse my warmth for I had a warm time with her) approach the fence which surrounded that “Golden Sile” set in an emerald sea, my wheat patch in the clover-plot. I knew her afar off, for she is a “notable” sow, the veteran of unnumbered battles and covered with scars. It cannot be said that she has any distinguishable ear-marks — neither “hals” “swallow-tails” “clips” or “crops” adorned her unocular appendages. Your customary “two clips” and an “under-crop” was nowhere to be seen about her head — so far as that

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was concerned you might have
been deprived of her ^{valuable} possession
without being able to prove the
identity of her corpse had it
been discovered - There was no
mistaking that ~~so~~ however,
Her long, thin body, well up on
legs as ~~lithic~~ and symmetrical
as a deer, ~~to~~ white, with black
spots, showing traces of ^{a Rengate} Berkshire
pedigree which, ^{the necessities of a} wild life, in the
swamps and on the hills of Carolina,
and ^{innumerable} ~~some~~ generations of hard
living ^{had so degraded} that its valuable features
have almost been lost and the
animal ~~reduced~~ reduced ^{at}
^{very nearly} ~~next~~ to the type of primal wild-
ness - The prolonged snout, as sharp and
solid as a Monitor's prow, adorned
on either side with tusks which the
forest-monarch might well envy
was scurred and furrowed like
the beak of some old battle-ship.
Upon the sinister side was ^a the fearful
ear where Duncan's black boy

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Dick had buried the bit of his
ape, full size, in her gourd. I
have heard that in that conflict
she lost one of her ears and
left two of Duncan's dogs hors
du combat - Her dexter termini-
ary has been eclipsed by a rifle
ball which by some strange
chance (never to be unfaded
unless by the curious counting
of some butcher-buy post mor-
tem inquest) missed her brain
and left her eye single to the salient
points of every face in the vicinity.
But it is useless to attempt a
specification of ~~the~~ the vestigia which
a thousand triumphant conflicts
have left upon this fierce and greatest
of the Scythian amazons. In brief, she
stood "in all her Gorgon terrors clad"
One-eyed, without an ear, breast of tail
and worn scarred - then the front of her
prospecting on the knoll before that
field of wheat. Clad in the arist
of summer costumes, forbearing

for a moment the ¹⁴ intricacies of "complaint" and "answer," I sought my library window to covet a breath of evilness and espyed the foe. As I said, I knew her at sight, and I knew too that trouble had come. Several times she had penetrated the chevaux de frise too with which I had sought to guard my treasure - Bitterly was I tempted, neighbor, to take down that the blue-burrelled Bullard which hangs goulter, and drawing a bead on ^{her} ~~the~~ surviving six "peepers." Barring her ^{wonder-} ~~most~~ know enough of my ^{wonder-} ~~most~~ marksmanship to enable you to ful good luck, you ^{wonder-} ~~most~~ estimate the chances of survivorship, on her part had I done so.

But I resisted the temptation and in an agony of soul awaited the development of events. Intimidated apparently of the surrenner of the land, so far as resistance was concerned, she moved rapidly to the attack, at first in the lateral style for which his own is pro-

vertical, and then "head on" at
 full speed, like a gun-boat
 charging a raft. With systematic
 gravity, she reared against the fence
~~and~~ inserted her ^{wonderful} proboscis, lower-lip,
 between the fourth and fifth rails,
 curled up her mother limbs, and
 deliberately "lubber-lifted" for a hole.
 Either the stanchness of the posts, the
 weight of the sails or the lightness
 of her ~~to~~ hams, made this attack a
 failure - I saw her as she snaf-
 fed her tusks and shook her eery-
 gy pate in evident discomfiture. I
 rejoiced. It was too soon. She was
 foiled merely, not baffled. Do you re-
 member that sharp angle where
 my fence joins our neighbor ^{James} ~~James's~~?
 There, after a moment's meditation,
 went the sow. With a foot upon
 each side, like a out running up
 a corner, up went the sow, up to
 the very top, took one more look -
 if I shivered malversations on her
 I hope I may be forgiven, - ~~simp~~

^{with}
 ed down into the clow, and
 started in a contented trot for
 the wheat. No time was to be
 lost. Burchard and Clippard
 in the form of white pants
^{or cotton} of professional leisure out dashed
~~and~~ ^{and} ~~part~~ ^{part} into the meadow
 under the boiling sun
 with my stumuck old New-
 foundland and a worn club,
 outrolling the scatty one
 which Powhatan held in
suspense over the head of
 your distinguished sumesake
~~broasted~~ — Eo instante "The chari
 sighted us," and "made evil"
 "slap" into the middle of the wheat.
 I tried to "fire across her bows" with
 a five-pound flint ~~rock~~ ^{rock} to "bring
 her to," but being somewhat out
 of breath with my sudden "spurt"
 and my aim ^{being} disconcerted by
 the rapidity of ^{formation} ~~formation~~, it fell short
 and merely dropped under her.

"stem" without inflicting ~~any~~
harmless.

~~Assay~~ My faithful ~~Booby~~
Gave chase ^{crushing} ~~through~~ the
~~passage~~. On and on, ^{regardless of expense} ~~the~~
golden ~~to~~ wheat-stalks, rushed ~~the~~
the bristling hog and Shaggy dog —
In the very middle, where the growth
was rankest, the cow turned ^{up} ~~to~~ bay.
I knew by the sound that the cow
flick ^{there} was sharp. I "hid on" ^{the} dog
and started towards the spring under
the pine-tree. A soon ~~after~~ an angry
cow, with the thermometer at 75 ~~and~~
eight, is too much for my dignity and
adipose developments. I had al-
most reached the cooling shade,
when a grunt, a roar, and
a rush behind me, caused me
to face to the rear and perceive
that the scene of active operations
had suddenly changed. Out of the
wheat with spines erected and her one
eye flashing with demoniac fury, ^{at} ~~and~~
full speed came the cow in a

straight line for the spring - and
neck and neck with her, first on
one side and then on the other
came the great Newfoundland
seeking vainly for a point of
attack - His white teeth clipped
over her scruffy pate and snapped
like steel-traps where her ears should
have been. All in vain. The poor
fellow was in despair - How could
~~she~~ ^{he} worry a hog without curie-
slurs. He was violently becoming
discouraged - I was just on her
pathway, half down the hill to the spring
I grasped my war club determined to
do valiant things. I am afraid, ^{neighbors}
that, if my blow had fallen as I
intended, there would have been an
end to that cow. and ^{and} when she came
paying her head to me, except to lower
her head a trifle as she came near.
When about three feet from me, by ^{careful} esti-
mation, I delivered my blow. It was
intended for the right side of her
head half way between the ear

and ~~Ed~~ A dull ~~staid~~ followed. I
have an indistinct impression that
my club rattled harmless from her
^{impugnably} ribs - There was a sharp pain in
my dexter leg, and the next mo-
ment I was off the perpendicular
and rushing through space feet
downwards, and feet forwards, with
a ~~confused~~ ^{looming} sea of mingled green
leaves and purple clover-heads ~~below~~
beneath me, and clutching desperately
with either hand a mass of wiry
bristles - I was on the back of that
infernal she-porker facing towards
the normal direction of the caudal
appendage, of which unfortunately she
was innocent - Where she was going
or how long she would ~~continue~~ ^{go}
~~remain~~ I knew not. The dog who
had given over his requests for an
ear, probably in his search for a
tail had fastened on my hand - I dash
with my ^{own} upon her back and the dog in tow
The spring event the cow ^{at} brought into
the swamp-hole below - I had no

idea, neighbor, what a deposit
of snuck ~~there~~ ^{I had there} ~~was at this place~~ until
I found myself floundering in its
oozy blackness, with that sow
and dog ~~for~~ fighting over me,
jussing kicking, struggling, with the
black tarry mud sticking into my
hair, my eyes and ^{my nose and} constantly apply-
ing for passage down my throat
I was in horrible straits. Was the
head of the house of fowens to be lost in that
villainous snuck bed? Was the bottom-
less pit snore certainly fattomless than
this? Would the coroner's jury
render a verdict of felv de sui and
my wife lose thereby the amount
of the policy I had provided to ac-
cure her a better mate after my
decease, should she incline to be
consolled? ^{such were my reflections.} And still dog and sow
rolled and tramped and bit
~~and scratched and~~ and splashed above me - a
hundred times, I verily believe.
I raised my fall above the
inky surface, only to have it
again submerged - I began

Hee causeth the grass to grow for the cattle
and herbe for the service of man that he may
bring forth food out of the earth.

Psalm. CIV. 14

"That ye may possess this good land, and leave it for
an inheritance for your children after you forever."

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

to question seriously L. B.
the probability of any inquiry at
all. I thought I saw some millen-
nial Agassiz, examining ^{fossilized} my os-
seous developments, deciding on
my loves in the dim past and
carefully scrutinizing the furrow
which that cursed sow's tusk had
left upon my femoral shaft, ^{and} ~~the~~
~~anywhere~~ ^{existence} that some war-like mis-
sile, in the days of this world's
wickedness, had laid me low.

But there came a pause in the
conflict. Overwines had com-
pelled an armistice. I raised
my head above the muck and
got a whiff or two of air.
Cautiously I approached
the bank - I was on the neu-
tral ground between the com-
batants. Guttering hold of a
tusk I rose a work
of stone benches from the
rings form of that foul
sea - The black mud had de-
stroyed my identity to both the
combatants - The old Newfoundland
could utter a frightened bark
and made off to a safe distance.
The sow, - well as I claimed ^{the}
mine out of my eyes I saw ^{that} ~~her~~
I give me a horrified stare, with
remaining visual, then turning with
erected bristles and a whisk of
that part where the tail ought to have
been, and a frightened snort, she fled
like the wind, and has never been
seen about the premises since -

The dog barked at me all the way to the house, looking around me and always when I called, but stoutly refusing to credit that limp of blackness with the my familiar voice - My wife - who had been reading Du Chaulieu - no sooner saw me than she fled to a neighbor shouting - "The garrilla! The garrilla!" and fell in spasms from fright - I firmly believe that nothing but jumping in the cistern saved me from capture as an escaped specimen of that curious bi-grand-crepedal brute -

I leave it to you Ben Smith if this does not give me a right to address you as "my neighbor" -

If this is not sufficient I have only to plead that kindness of feeling which leadeth the true neighbor to "show mercy" unto his fellow-man which I am sure exists upon your part towards me, for I have not forgotten the kindly messages which came from you, when our youngest returned groping dumbly, at the gateway of the Tomb. And that I leave only the kindest feelings towards you.

In consequence of this, our neighborhood, I make bold therefore to offer ^{propose to} you the following:

If you will kill that old cow and not let another hog run wild for five years, I will give you the best pair of "Chester Whites" in my yard.

And of this I will speak further in my next - Your neighbor
March 1st 1840
Stephen Jowers

Who is my neighbor?

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