

Trinity Rectory  
Lime Rock, CT  
May 5 1888

My dear Mr. Goodwin,

I am extremely obliged to you for the pamphlet and the book you sent me, and especially for your very kind letter. The book I will read at earliest opportunity, and will return. The tract on the "Surplus" seems to me full of sensible statements and suggestions, and a valuable contribution to literature on the subject of the tariff. I take comparatively little interest in discussions on political topics which do not involve some moral principle. The only public question which greatly enlists my sympathies at the present time is the Temperance question. When we consider that nine hundred million dollars are spent on liquor in this country, and only eighty five millions are spent on public education, and that six hundred millions are invested in tobacco while the paltry sum of five and a half millions are devoted to missions at home and abroad which seek the Extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, it seems to me that good men should pay more attention to those things which concern the moral character of the nation, and the spiritual interests of the individual.

The great surplus of the country is one of its greatest dangers. A swollen treasury is likely to be the hotbed of political corruption. An army of useless public officers will feed on its fatness. Demoralization naturally ensues, and of course national degeneracy follows.

I wish a portion of the surplus funds could be devoted to carrying out the idea of our great Washington, of founding a National University. A university on a large scale, with ample endowment and income, to impart instruction in science, art, and all useful knowledge, might be of incalculable good. In connection with it should be branches or schools in all the states and territories, in which young men and women should be taught practical things, professions, trades, agricultural and mechanical pursuits, and other things necessary to enabling them to pursue an honorable livelihood. Of course it should be understood that in these institutions should be departments of instruction specially adapted to the training of young women in medicine, nursing, needlework, cooking, etc.

For your friendly and welcome letter I must thank you most heartily. It is always a pleasure to me to listen to your conversation, and to read your writings, for I always get some good ideas. Men who think consecutively and habitually, and whose thoughts are above the commonplace affairs of every day life are to be valued.

In your letter you remark "the kingdom of heaven is not far off: it is at hand, in and around us, while we can realize it to ourselves only by conforming to God's ways." A truer sentiment could not be uttered. It is the sentiment of a soul that is feeling after God and finds Him in His glorious works: a soul that reads about Him on every page of the sublime volume of Nature, or as Shakespeare says in "As You Like It",

"Finds tongues in trees, books in running brooks,  
Sermons in Stones, and good in everything."

But the richest revelation of the Divine Father is in His Holy Word where it is shown that life and immortality are brought to light through Jesus Christ, the incarnate Deity who died for our sins and rose again for our justification. I think the long and painful illness you have borne with such remarkable patience and fortitude has brought you near unto God who is the Source of all spiritual consolation and grace. I have often felt that you are not far from the kingdom of heaven, and that you are not indisposed eventually to make a profession of Christian discipleship. I trust the day may come when you shall esteem it a duty and a privilege to make acknowledgement of loyalty and love to the Divine Master in the way that He has appointed, and I pray that God's blessing may always be with you and every member of your dear family.

With sincere regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Richard F Putnam

