

Butteville, Jan. 31st 1876

Dear Dave, The Christmas gift which you prepared for me on the evening of the 25th of December last and forwarded to my address came duly to hand, and for the kind sentiments and fond remembrance which it brought to these distant shores, you surely have my sincere thanks.

In return permit me to send greeting our kindest wishes, hoping that Mrs. Dave and yourself may long be spared to enjoy all the blessings which are ever attendant upon those who have the courage to do right to their own conscience for in adhering to that duty we fulfill the highest laws of life.

As you have been considerate enough to give me a personal sketch of David Crawford as the beginning of the Centennial year found him, I will reciprocate in like manner. The photograph which I sent you some time since was not by any means a lifelike one. And to convince you of that fact I herewith enclose one recently taken. And from which you will perceive I have changed but little since we last met. I am heavier now than at that time, weighing 175 lbs.

Increasing years have somewhat modified my former habits of life, but its real enjoyments are today the same as they were when I reached my 40th year. I enjoy life and health better now than I did at that age. I have no regular hour for retiring but read or write as the case may be at ~~any~~ any hour of the day or night. And sleep less than any person with whom I have ever been acquainted. This I attribute to the strength of my nerves system and an acquired habit of thought which creates a desire to resist sleep if I have anything interesting on my mind.

You say you are presbyterian in religion. I am not partial to any particular form of church government. Except in hope, I know no more about the next life than I did at the hour of my birth. But I do know that in all ages of the past, that priesthood & sectarianism have been the greatest obstacle in the way of new advanced ideas in progressive life. Presbyterianism is of Scottish origin and the early progenitors from whom you sprang were taken from Scotland by Cromwell and transplanted to the Emerald

Isle for a political purpose and they have not to this day lost their identity and influence in St. Patrick's Isle. The time is not far back in the ? when we were not permitted to express a belief in accordance with our own honest convictions, if our spiritual teacher ~~to~~ told us that by command of Mr. Joshua on a particular day the time from the rising of the sun until the going down thereof was twice the length of time fixed by nature's inexorable law. We must either acquiesce or die. Who are they that believe at this day that the

Sun stood still in the midst of the heavens or rather the Earth remained stationary for about a whole day. I believe in the justice of the ten commandments just as I believe in any other truth whether found within or outside of the lids of the Bible.