

To Hon. J. Pierce & Mrs. E. L. Pierce, Gorham, Maine, United States of America.

St. Petersburg, Russia, February 9/21, 1856.

My dear parents,

The steamer which left America on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January brought your letter of the 19<sup>th</sup> January, which I received the day before yesterday. I was glad to learn by it that you had read my long letter written soon after my arrival here. The same mail brought Lewis' letter which told me of your renewed suffering & illness, and you will believe I most sincerely sympathized with you and hope for your recovery.

I am sorry that I cannot write a long letter today: business prevents it. I have so much on my mind to describe to you that I should not know where to stop, but I dare say you have seen notices in the journals of some events here which have been attended with much ceremonial display — I have seen the rites of marriage, baptism & funerals — have attended Court on several gala occasions — and dined & supped at the Emperor's table — have been at the Opera & ballet & French theatre &c in the evenings — am extending & making choice of my circle of agreeable acquaintances — do all my duty, as well as I know how, as Secretary of Legation — have frozen the tip of one ear — have slid down the ice-hills — am studying French & Russian — and have a rule, too much

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MMN #31865

Date: Feb. 9-21, 1856

Description: Josiah Pierce on diplomat service in Russia

neglected, of reading the Bible and some law daily - have  
been confined to the home with a feverish cold, from which  
I have fully recovered - am now very well ~~rested~~ and  
the days fly past very swiftly in my regular way of life -  
but my happiest moments are & have been those in which  
I recall the well known forms & faces of my kindred & friends,  
at home, and their dwellings, and the roads & streets and  
matters of daily life - If I can serve my country in any  
valuable manner while in this occupation I shall be contented  
and remain in it as long as it is good for me or my native  
land. It is little that I can do, <sup>now</sup> - and I have little  
responsibility save the constant exercise of prudence and that  
reticence & self-control which I have not hitherto learned.

I am sorry on the whole I wrote to you about  
sending me money; but I shall save, I trust, enough, to  
clear all my liabilities which you have guaranteed, before  
July, even if Lewis does not collect enough for that purpose,  
as I hope he may - As to what the R. R. Co. owe me  
of course he should retain my Attorney's lien on all the papers  
or accounts of theirs, he, as my agent, has in his hands, and  
appropriate it accordingly -

I would not contest with Quimby, but make the best  
settlement you can - You can negotiate, undoubtedly, in a perfectly

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I have fully recovered - am now very well & stout[?] and  
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I would not contest with Quimby, but make the best  
settlement you can - You can negotiate, undoubtedly, in a perfectly

civil and kindly way with his lawyer.

Don't let your pecuniary complicities fret you - fretting won't help them. They must be quietly and gradually untwisted some other way - This letter you see is mainly addressed, in business respects to father - Mother may not find much that is interesting -

I fear my books may be lost in Portland if my name is not put in them. I would willingly pay for a nice copper plate for printing labels, in the most elegant clear style of round hand, to be pasted in them. Please ask Lewis to get Lowell & Senter or G.R. Davis to get such a plate made, and have the printing done -

Please let my dear Aunt Anne know that I have just this moment received her good letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> January, and that I continually think of her with great respect & affection, and feel many ties to the house where I have lived the last five years - and that I wish her to write very often to me and not wait for answers, & send my love to all my friends who care for it.

I suppose Lewis goes to the Rifle Corps dances - If I did not know it to be of the highest importance for him to be very economical, I should earnestly desire him to join my old company - I wish he would tell Capt. Marr that I should like to be with them ~~boys~~ "a few days" "a few days" - Lewis may have all my rights upon the uniform I wore if he can get one free in exchange, & if he joins the Company, tell him never by any means to take any other rank than that of a private.

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I never was so warm during a winter as I have been throughout  
this one, in the snug, & equally & continually heated, houses here -  
The weather is now very fine - the sky clear - the snow very  
light, five or six inches only, on the ground - we have 20  
degrees of frost occasionally, and the winds are very piercing -  
With all this cold, cholera still prevails to the extent of 50  
or 60 reported cases, from week to week -

I am obliged to close my letter here to copy a despatch:  
and with much love to all at home, and constant hopes  
for ~~the~~ ease and comfort for your declining years

I remain your affectionate son  
Josiah -

P.S. I enclose some Russian lace collars for mother and the girls -

For Providence  
Dec 21<sup>st</sup> 1856

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