

Worcester March 5, 1850

Dear Bradburn,

Yours of yesterday was recd today. I have read the article in the Quarterly—and think it will do no harm, unless to the writers own cause.

I also received another letter from you a week ago today—which I intended to answer earlier. One reason why I have not, was that two days of the time I was obliged to work for Drew—and this is the fifth day in which I have been completely absorbed in a law argument, which it was necessary to finish soon as possible. I have just sent it away. It was on the pose office question, for the enlightenment of Butler. I had a letter from him last week, giving a hasty opinion—he not having, as he said, "completed his researches."

The purport of his opinion was, that out of respect to precedents, he was not then prepared to say the laws were unconstitutional, but that my "argument goes very far to show, that no power to pass nay such laws has been delegated to the Congress of the United States. If the question were a new one, I should expect the courts to repudiate the claim of the Federal Government to any such authority."

This will do, but I hope to get a better one from him. I have just written him as long an argument as I dared write, blowing up his precedents. I hope it will bring him around right.

Another reason I have not answered your letter, has been that I know not what to write—and do not now. It seems that every time I write, I only put my foot in it. And I feel that I know so little of the facts that it is folly for me to say anything about it.

I feel less free to speak of it, because you seem to insist that I shall condemn Robinson, without hearing his side of the question. This I cannot do. I have never before heard any thing but good of Robinson, either from your own lips, or the lips of those in whose opinions I placed confidence. He once did me a kindness, as you know, unasked, and in a delicate manner. I cannot condemn such a man, on hearing but one side of a story, and perhaps that imperfectly. If your contracts had all been in writing, signed and sealed, I would not have condemned him without a hearing. How then can I do it, when it seems that most of your contracts were nothing but loose understandings, suppositions, and expectations, such as were liable to give rise to half a dozen misunderstandings, instead of one? And that too without any dishonesty or meanness on the part of either.

I shall probably wait some days for Butler's opinion—before going to Boston. But when there, I shall be willing to listen to any thing you wish to say—and to aid, or comfort you to the extent of my power. But I cannot attempt to decide the question between you and Robinson, against him, without knowing what he has to say. And I hope you will not ask me to do so.

Yours, truly

L. Spooner