Smithsonian Institution
Washington Sunday May 11

Dear Lucius

I felt very sure that I had not carried off any stolen goods, but have given my trunk a thorough search, and cant find any such coat. I am sorry for it, as I can appreciate the inconvenience of losing the key of the liquor. The loss of a mere corkscrew, though serious, is reparable, for you can knock off the head of the bottle, but to be unable to get at the bottle, is as bad as having no liquor at all — worse in some respects, as it approaches the condition of Tantalus — Approaches? Exceeds it, I should say, in the case of Apple jack, for Tantalus longed only for water which he could not reach. Even vengeful Jupiter would never have tempted his victim with unapproachable whiskey. Any way, I have not got the key, and I hope you'll have another made before I get back — I think of applying for a "leave of abstinence" in ten days or a fortnight, & going on to see you.

Your speculations on the northern border states, or rather on their time interests, are perfectly sensible & that is the very reason why they are impossible — When was there any sense connected with the subject of niggre ownership? I will tell you what