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James B. Finley Letters

2-15-1834

Letter from William B. Christie to James B. Finley

William B. Christie

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Roscoe, O.
Feb 15

Rev Amos A. Finley

Cincinnati

Ohio

Ms B. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1.
Roscoe 1834

Roscoe Feb 15th 34

Uncle Finley

The enclosed is a copy of a letter which I have
this day sent to Misses Waugh & Mason on the subject
of the contemplated Western paper - I wish you to read
it, and if you think best show it to as many of our friends
as you can - I want you to send me immediately
your own views on the subject of the letter - and also
the general opinion so far as you can learn it
My Dan is up, and I feel like fight - I shall
be slow to believe the risk will ever accept the proposed
paper - Here follows the letter

"Misses Waugh & Mason

While I am writing let me say a few
words on the subject of the contemplated Western paper,
I have had no opportunity to correspond with you at a dis-
tance - or to learn the views of those who are supposed to exert a
controlling influence in the Western Confs - But I venture the predic-
tion, they will never support the paper in its present form.

Feeling as I do a deep interest in this subject, I will join in a few
words the substance of what I would say if the question was
before the Conference on a resolution to patronize - I object
1st The size is not such as would do credit or honor to, or for
the cause of the Church - Can it be thought that such a paper
would be creditable to the Church in the West

2nd It does not correspond with respectable papers of the day - No
respectable paper in the State that I have seen - whether Religious,
Literary, Political but is printed upon a larger sheet

3rd The difference between the Western paper and that in N York, is
such as to render it not only difficult - but painful to the views
and feelings of Western Preachers to push it into circulation
What can they say - when asked why should we pay \$2.00 for
a paper printed in Cincinnati which contains less by near four
columns than one in N York at the same price?

4th - Where is the common justice of this when the principles, upon
which both is established, is the same - and the proceeds of both,
are applied to the same great object

I know it is said the contemplated paper
size of the 1st vol of Christian Advocate - I can understand this in
no other light than presuming largely upon the ignorance of the
Western Preachers - and calculated to make a very imperfect
- If it supposed that the Western Preachers do not know there has
been within the last eight years an improvement of nearly one
hundred per cent in the size of new papers in circulation, when
the 1st of G. A. issued from the press the size corresponded
with the general circulation of the country - Can the same be

said in truth of the contemplated paper - I think not - When
a paper recommended by five of the Conference is put before many
of the Country papers - within the same territory of Country, what
must all honorable men think? Think, for Sir, they will think

I have been casting about in my own mind
the whole of this, to me, strange procedure - and can think of but
two reasons, which could have led to its adoption - The
first is they wished indirectly to kill the whole project, and
therefore the recommended establishing such a paper as the
West could not accept without disgrace - As this impugns the
motives of the Book Committee and calls in question their
honor - of it I will take no notice - though many persons
will think it the true reason - The second is - The large re-
commended would be left expense - and therefore a pecuniary
savings to the Church - Upon the correctness of this assumption
I wish to say a few words -

If a desire to prevent pecuniary loss
was a leading motive with the Committee, they have I think
been most unfortunate in their choice - Did it never occur
to them that the success of a paper such as they have recom-
mended was doubtful - That hundreds not to say
thousands would not take it - who would have taken a res-
pectable paper - Did it never occur to them that the
matter of expense depended more upon the length of the
subscription list than upon the size of the sheet - Did it
never enter their halting thoughts that some account was
to be made of the Character of the Church in the Mississippi
Valley - If pecuniary saving was the motive they have as-
sumed I understand it - taken the very steps to prevent the attain-

ment of their own desire -
But I will pursue the subject
no further - All that I have heard speak of the specimen
numbers are disappointed - And I am much mistaken if
them by subscribing can be obtained in the bounds of this State
- whereas upon proper principles hundreds might have
been found with ease - I do not know what course things
may take - But shall be much mistaken if the West submits
to the humiliation of accepting the present offer - Nor then
can I tell what other men will do - My own course is
fixed, without some new light upon the subject, should I
ever meet on the floor of the Ohio Conference, I will use
what influence I can - to have the whole rejected
from the patronage of the Conference - I do believe the
paper as now contemplated ought never to see the light,
and I do hope if the Book Committee are sincere

in the desire to establish a western paper - they will
review their proceedings - and give us a paper - such
as will do honor to the Church and be acceptable
among the people

Yours
Moses Wright & Mason
W.B. Christie

Well perhaps you will think more than
ever there is occasion for you "straight to the point and dark
room" for say you this is queer taking for a boy - all
I can say by way of excuse is - I am a Western man by
birth - habit and every prejudice - my all, honor and
title that all may be its adventure with the interest
of the Church in the West - And I can not look calmly on
when I see such a proposition as this - which if ever carried
into practical effect will be at the expense of the honor
and character of the Western Preachers - Conscience I am
of the old men in the West do not submit tamely to
be walked over by a few little boys - You know
the Book Committee will be compelled to review
their proceedings and enlarge the sheet if they will
not do this - let the whole project go to the winds - I
would prefer no paper to a paper which every time
I saw would bring the remembrance of our disgrace

Write to me immediately and let me know what
course this thing is going to take

Moses was in moderate health when I
left home - My own health is but poor - though it
has been improving for a few weeks - we have some
prosperity on the soil - though it has in some respects
been a year of painful responsibility - Forgive this
scrawl - It is written in haste - when I get a
little elbow room I will answer your letter
though I think, if you will examine your files,
you will find your name in my debt and have
no cause to scold - Ever one love to Aunt and
all friends - Pray for us yours

Rev. L. W. Finley
W.B. Christie