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James B. Finley Letters

4-3-1846

Letter from John McDonald to James B. Finley

John McDonald

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Latta & Co.
 Apr 3rd
 Rev James B. Finley
 Columbus
 Ohio

Col J. C. Howard
 White 30
 1846

SO. LIFE
 MASS

Poplar Ridge, near Lattsville, Pop county Ohio. April 3rd 1846

Old friend Finley

I am a letter in your dept, which has ^{been} long due, and I have only poverty to plead as an excuse, as I had no particular subject on which to write, and I do not like to scribble to an old friend without saying something worth reading: but I am no better off for matter for a letter now, than I was when I received your kind letter; and have come to the conclusion to write you a few lean lines at ^aventure.

In the first place, I was in Chillicothe last week, and set the editors of the papers ⁱⁿ motion on the proposed celebration of the fiftieth year, from the first settlement of Chillicothe. Every person with whom I have spoken on the subject, appear anxious, that ^{the} proposed Jubilee, ^{of the 20th of next May} should take place. If some two or three individuals do not take the lead in this matter there will be a failure. Although men are numerous, yet competent leaders are but few who are able to give tone and direction to guide the many, either ⁱⁿ politics or theology. The great mass of men wish to do what is right, ^{but} they are either too indolent, or incapable of investigation and therefore the necessity of having leaders to give impulse and motion to the many. With regard to the proposed Jubilee on the 20 of May, if ^{you} can with propriety leave your work and make a trip ~~to~~ to Chillicothe, and hold some confabs with the citizens of that place, I believe you can do more to give impetus to the proposed meeting, than ^{any} other man living.

In the Scioto Gazette of next week will appear some anecdotes which ^{also said something} have written of Capt. John the big Shawnee chief, whom I suppose you recollect. I have ^{also} of Captain Lewis, and of Logan, you can see the paper at Columbus where they exchange for the gazette. I thought those anecdotes of these distinguished sons of the forest worth preserving.

David Reed came to see ^{us} some time since, and gave us the first ^{intimation} of you being about to be located in Columbus. He told us with a grave face that you were about being sent to the penitentiary, my wife raised up both hands and stared wildly, exclaiming "What in the world brother Jimmy ^{can} have done, that would send him to the penitentiary." David said he did not ^{know} all particulars, but that it appeared pretty certain that ^{you} would go. The old lady said that "If old Jimmy had committed a crime, that would send ^{him} to the penitentiary, she could never again in the honesty of man ^{believe} ~~man~~." At length David told her ^{you} were going to ^{the} preach to the poor convicts in the penitentiary. She then breathed freer, but she felt a little hurt, with David for giving her such a fright.

My daughter Effie Gore is lying very ^{the} low from effects of a fall from a ^{the} ~~slay~~ ^{slay}, about the time of melting of the last snow. We heard from her a few days since, she was thought to be on the mend, but was unable to sit up. The other branches of our family are in their usual health.

The Methodists in this region are going on ⁱⁿ their usual ways, some times advancing backwards, and ^{at} other times turning a head, distancing all competitors.

Last year they lost a great many, the present year they ^{have} whipped up and doubled their former loss. Messrs Webster and Mahary are the preachers on this circuit, they both stand pretty fair with our citizens. I think ^{Mahary} preaches a little too much hellfire and damnation, and Webster a little too much on the eccentric. Let him without sin throw ^{the} first stone. They ^{are} both popular on the circuit.

Should you visit Chillicothe write to me when; and will endeavor to meet you if possible. I am playing a peep for a part of this county, so that if you write to ^{me} let me know at least a week in advance of the ^{time} you may expect to be there.

Your little name sake, James Finley Morgan grows finely, and loves to ^{to} school, and almost every time he sees me, he enquires of me, ^{when} I have ^{had} word from uncle Jimmy. you are uncle to all my children and grandchildren.

That you may live as long as life may ^{be} desirable, and ^{when} you ^{are} called to the better world, may you depart without pain or regret.

I am truly your friend
John McDonald

Rev J B Finley.

Rev J B Finley
Chillicothe
Ohio