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James B. Finley Letters

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Letter from J.M. Jameson to James B. Finley

J.M. Jameson

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Somerset, May 25th 1848.

Brother Finley,

Yours of the 19th inst was received today, per mail, and it was a real treat. We feel much interest in the doings of the present General Conference, and hope you will get "through safely". I have seen the sketch in the Advocate up to the 12th day, and have been able to form some judgment as to the feeling of the Conference on the Southern question, particularly so called. I was pleased, as well as disappointed, at the unanimity with which the Conference refused to receive Dr. Pearce as a representative of the M. E. C. South. That in my judgment was as it should have been. I knew the Conference would be called to act on that case early in its session, and I looked on that as a test vote as a politician would say. I had also observed that the Baltimore delegates leaned a little Southward. This is natural. Their situation is a delicate one. As soon as I saw the vote on the reception of Dr. P. I concluded that the clause set up by the South would have to be adjusted by law, and the plan you speak of — "a legal arbitration" — strikes me as a very proper method of adjustment. It would be as I think the most satisfactory method in the eyes of the religious world, and I think, after a little reflection, I would prefer its reference to the Supreme Bench. From

Rev. A. A. Finley
In General Conference assembled
at Baltimore
Pa.



John Finley
May 28

such a count there could be no reasonable ground of complaint; and it would settle the question in the estimation of all Christendom. and I think that the South would be more likely to succeed there than any where else. I hope the case will be disposed of in that way. I am of the opinion that the South do not want an amicable adjustment of the matter. Their whole policy for 4 years has been to widen the breach. All their aggressive measures have driven to that point, - their condemnation of the discipline, and their sending a representation to you, were of the same character. They are glad the letter was not received. They will endeavor to make capital out of it, by which to hold Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi. Nor do they want the property of the Church, so much as they want the General Conference to refuse to make any arrangement, which would show a disposition to do justice in the matter. I know it might be thought ungenerous thus to judge; but facts are stubborn things. I hope you will

make a Mississippi & Arkansas Conference, and also a Western V. & Kentucky Con.

I regret a little that our brethren in the Western part of the Conference, should feel so much solicitude on the division of our Conference. It would be a very unfortunate arrangement for this part of

the work. We have quite a number of brethren in this district, who have spent their lives and strength in the work elsewhere, and now, almost, if not altogether superannuated; and who can not, and will not, move their families; and who, in a very short time, must retire from the work; and to divide the Conference, now, would leave the work, very soon in the hands of young men. Besides, others who are now willing to let our hear, would not, if the Conference was divided. And I can assure you that all the efficient men, on whom much calculation can be made in future, are decidedly opposed to the division. Such a division can not fail greatly to embarrass, not to say cripple, the energies of the Church in this part of the work. I hope that measure will not be urged. If it had been supposed that any memorials would have been sent to Conference, we could have sent up a memorial against it, almost unanimously; but we supposed the matter settled by the action of Conference and the correspondence in the W. C. Advocate.

But I am writing too much. - please excuse me. The Preachers are in usual health except Bro J. W. Shaw. He comes near dying by breaking of the stomach, but he is recovering. - He can not preach. We are all in usual health.

Yours affectionately
Rev. J. B. Finley
J. M. Jameson.