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James B. Finley Letters

6-8-1830

Letter from Robert D. Smith to James B. Finley

Robert D. Smith

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Dr. A. Talley, and the other missionaries
are in tolerable health. Pray for us,
and the prosperity of the cause of
God among the red men of the woods.

May the God of all grace
keep you in the path of life, and
crown you in the ~~new~~ world of glory.

R. D. Smith

Recd
R. D. Smith
Choctaw Nation

25
David Atwood
Jun 13.
To the Stationed Preacher
of the
Methodist Episcopal Church
Cincinnati Ohio

Choctaw Nation June 8. 1830

423
Rev. & Dear Bro. - Tho. you are unknown to me
I can with the best feelings of my heart ad-
dress you as one beloved. For, with very
few exceptions, all who occupy the itine-
rating field, are inspired with the same
spirit, and bound together by the strong-
est ties. And for one all who so enthu-
sias-ly forgo the pleasures of this present life, as
a consistent itinerating preacher must
do, to enjoy the confidence of his brethren
and be useful in the church, I feel a
degree of attachment higher and stronger
than to any other class of men.

My object in writing, as is mostly
the case, is to ask you ^{to do me} a favor. But af-
ter being moved by selfish feelings, con-
victed on by several other strong mo-
tives. One is to excite in your mind
a greater interest in behalf of my re-
lations, living in the bounds of your con-
ference, than you otherwise might have,
so that should you cross their path in
your journeyings you may have a
kind of introduction, and increase
impetus to urge upon them all care &
diligence for the securing of their souls
salvation. 6 years since, last January, I left
my Father with the view of being absent

but a short time. But being disappointed in
my plans and ~~remained~~ in my circumstances,
I, at first, did ^{not} care to return until I would let-
ter my condition. Before this was done to the
extent which I desired, He, who I now see, has
followed me with goodness and tender mercies
through all the days of my life, taught me a
new and better way, and set before my humbled
and sanctified ambition objects which, only,
can fill a human soul, and profitably ac-
cupy an immortal mind. Some time after
this I entered, as a labourer, into the itinerating
field to which I seemed directed by an over-
ruling Providence, and since have found
no time to visit the land of my Father &
the home where for whose salvation my soul
peculiarly yearns. Some of them, however, I
trust, have chosen the "better part," and are lay-
ing up treasure in heaven. My parents are Pres-
byterians, and live 1 mile from Havana, Champlain
County. A second object, is, to solicit such
aid as the benevolent feel disposed and able
to afford to our brother. Last year
we received a Box of clothes, kitchen fur-
niture, &c. which had been worn and used,
from New York, and which were highly
pleasing and profitable to our brethren. I
have thought that many under your charge
would derive much pleasure from furnish-
ing such things, and they could easily be
conveyed to Keokuk where we could get
them without trouble. Clothing of every kind
which would be fast wearing in your City,
would not only be profitable, but tend

much to improve the taste, and diffuse the spi-
rit of civilization here. The favour which I desire
for myself, is, your attention to procuring and fur-
nishing me a suit of clothes. In this country
we have to give \$10 for making a coat, which,
with the price of the cloth is a sweeping ex-
penditure on our purses. In consequence of which
I have concluded to try an experiment of get-
ting clothes from your City. Some thing strong
and durable, at about 25 or 30 dollars, would
be most suitable. I think they suit can be
made to do with my breast measure 2 ft 16 in.
and a waist measure 2 ft 13 inches. The arms of
the coat, and legs of the pantaloons must be
of the longest measure. My height is 6 ft 1 inch.
Clothes which I purchase are always too short
in the arms and legs, and are never shrank
before making. You will please to write
and let me know in what way the thing
can be done. ~~the~~ money for wardrobe. It could
be done either by ^{the} Bishop who attends our next
conference; by letter, or left in Keokuk or
Hatchery in the hands of some person in
whose care he could confide. If you send
any thing direct them to the care of S. Maul-
ding & Herkissall Keokuk, and Robt. D.
Smith Coctaw station.

Should you favour me
with a few lines, I will give you a par-
ticular account of our mission in answer.
At present I have only room to say, that,
notwithstanding our many difficulties
the ~~mission~~ societies are in a prosperous condition.