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James B. Finley Letters

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Letter from David Young to James B. Finley

David Young

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Manville 11th 20th 1817

My old friend

Tho the indulgence of our com-
-man preserver I reached home last evening
I am giving part of my 3^d volume in not
a very good state of health as you can see
by the effects of my nerves on this scrawl

Yours of — Mailed Youngs Town Letter
came safe to hand was thankfully rec^d and
its contents duly appreciated tho I fear they
cannot be properly considered for to write
truths on Earth "Whom all the world &
the heart worshippeth" will be thought by
his blind & superstitious devotees, to be presump-
-tion if not "Dammable heresy." But you
know me. I have faith of my own let who else
will believe as I do. As to knowledge my stock
is but short & opportunities tho small not so
well improved I think if I have ^{no} Chinese nor
Arabic at command. I have a little com-
-man sense, — And tho there is much to ap-
-plaud & admire in D^r yet if I never
get to heaven till I believe it a sin to
eat hog meat And for a man wanting a
finger to preach! — With several other super-
-stitions dogmas of the doctor I shall never get
there! With respect to the ^{pro}positions of contingency
& the pains he has taken to prevent the Almighty from
being the author of sin I do not think we gain

Dear James M^r Drury
Hartford
Ohio



1/21

much by it any how. It is perhaps the most
wicked to make God the author of sin. But how
much better is it to make him ignorant?

I have not got back by me so I must write from memory. But I think on Acts 2 he has undertaken to remove an old difficulty by throwing dirt on it. He seems to presume that if the Party perceived what ever comes to pass then it must come to pass as he sees it Ego. — And to choke down these stiff antagonists gravely tells us that the almighty does not know every thing (if this is not his meaning he mates with dissimulation) For his argument is "The Almighty has power to make more worlds than he has made, but has not done it & then by what I call a pure sophism infers from the non exertion of power the non exertion of knowledge which he (I think) very disingenuously ^{calls} wisdom when it suits his purpose. Wisdom is an active thing. Knowledge or perception is the mere capacity to know. You sir perhaps can account for this quibbling & shifting of terms in the D^r from his ignorance of their purport but I cannot, it must be a design to deceive the ignorant like us.

"A God all mercy is a God unjust," is a very judicious remark of a celebrated writer. But it is no more true than the following "A God all power is a God unwise." The truth is Christians know of no such Gods. Suppose we affirm "That God made by his power as many worlds as his wisdom would permit that is as many as a God of infinite perfections could make. Then pray sir what is become of the D^r premises? What of his conclusions?"

Besides the idea of power quiescent is perceptive

But the Idea of quiescent discernment shocks common sense. There must be objects of discernment in order for them to be discovered or there must not. Now it seems unfathomable to me how infinite knowledge can discover a nanentity. And it is just as incomprehensible how God himself could make or permit an object of discernment without knowing it perfectly.

We say God is unchangeable in all his perfection
 But if there be any facts or circumstances now un-
 known to the Almighty, he must either always be ig-
 nant of them, or there will be a change in his
 knowledge. No art, no sophistry, can set this conclusion
 aside. I have only to add that the L^d has I
 think failed in this case to do Jehovah any
 honor. It seems as easy to believe Spinoza (at
 least for me) as to believe the L^d if I can under-
 stand him! You perhaps will not be so much
 astonished at these remarks if you will exam-
 ine attentively what extraordinary pains Achan
 has taken to send Judas to heaven! *Actum Secundum*
 "Great men are not always wise!"

I thought this the most important part of your letter & have poorly fill'd my paper if I had room I would say something about the "Lair" as to poor law designing Law I believe of him as I have for many years. He is short lived now. He is come out!

I love God. Have much trouble, & am bound for a better world Mr Young wishes to be remembered to you. Give my respect to Sister I & the daughter & thought my prayers for you for ever.

Yours
Wm. H. C.

I kept my moccasins for you forever.
J. H. Huxley
Dyarr