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12-17-1851

Letter from Benjamin F. Tefft to James B. Finley

Benjamin F. Tefft

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They are nobody to me. Methodism is all, and they
may take their course, as I will take mine.

My health is so dim that I am doing ^{nothing} here at
all. I occasionally look into the college but do
no teaching of any sort. I am resting and re-
cruiting. May God bless you and yours. My
wife joins me in sending regards.

As ever,

Your true friend,
B. F. Leff.

Dr.
B. F. Leff
1852

Yenese College
Lima, Dec. 17, 1851.

My dear Brother

and Friend— Your welcome letter of the
8th instant is at hand; and, without delay, I sit
right down to answer it.

As you supposed, I was somewhat posted
up in relation to the doings of the church, and
of the Ohio conference in particular; but you
have thrown some new light on the Repository
Committee of that body. There is only one dark
spot left, that I have no candle bright enough
to light up. That is, what am I to understand
by the course of Dr. Elliott, the man to whom
I have stood up, through thick and thin, ^{and} no
other of his friends is doing, or has done? At
the last Gen. Conference, when the tide was setting
against him, and in favor of Simpson, his un-
grateful and ungenerous rival, (for Elliott
had made Simpson all he was), I stood by the
old doctor, even after some of Simpson's runners
told me plainly, that if I did not let Elliott
go, Simpson & Co. were going to turn me out
of office. I told them to turn as quick as
they pleased: I should be free and no man's
slave: and all was risked for my friend.
That friend knew all about it; and now,
though he has seemed ever since to be grateful
for my friendship, and was writing to me about

getting up a Theological School in this region, in which I had promised him a professorship, and that with his usual warmth and enthusiasm, he was at the very same moment operating with my worst enemies, and his enemies — the enemies I had been fighting for him at the General Conference and ever afterwards — effectually trying to injure his most true and abiding friend and advocate! All I can say is, I am astounded. I thought I knew Dr. Elliott. Dr. West has written me, that if I have a heart to forgive Charles Elliott, he thinks I have some help from heaven.

But I have that help, thank God! But the old Dr. don't know what he is doing. He will come to his senses by and by. As soon as those men get done with using him, they will drop him as they did in Pittsburgh. You know how that was.

Though I thank you sincerely for what you did at Springfield for me, and do not see how a man of self-respect could have done otherwise, I would like no better fun at Boston, if God spares my life, than to have skinned the Ohio conference, had it passed those resolutions against me that you speak of. As it is, they will set it for some other thing. I mean the majority, of course.

I had not heard about Moody's abusing you and Jones, but it will do no harm to you or to him. Moody will find his level in Boston, and so, I think, will that packed Ohio delegation.

Right glad shall I be to hear from you often on the topics you mention, as the next session of Gen. Conference is going to have some big work to do, and I would be glad to have the benefit of your experience.

My health is very poor, but I think I am mending a little. The truth is, I am almost a martyr to my post in Cincinnati; and because I did not actually die there, those fellows now wish to cut my head off for certain. When I took the Repository, it had 5000 subscribers. I left it with 17000. When I went to Cin., the Concern was publishing no books of its own: when I left, it was publishing about one volume a month regularly, and making money rapidly by the operation. The sales of last year, for example, were 336000 volumes! That is all my own work, and the world knows it; but the Ohio Conference, or rather a few of its pestiferous members, seek now to kill me, because I do not worship and support them. But I know them too well to worship them.

However, I care but little about it. I do what I have done for the good of our common cause and not for Joseph, George, Granville & Co.