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Finley Letters

James B. Finley Letters

3-25-1837

Letter from James B. Finley to Wright & Swormstedt

James B. Finley

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Dear Mother to ^{Mrs.} ~~Wright & Swarnest~~ and to
all friends & Enimies your ~~MS~~ ^{Wright & Swarnest}
Meps Wright & Swarnest

March 25 1837 Middletown
Brother Wright & Swarnest
This evening I received your of the 21 Inst
and I only have to say in reply that when
I received your former communication that I
was much excited at the perusal for it was so
unexpected, and My temperament is warm at the
best times and having been afflicted & serious
I might have misunderstood your meaning and
as Mother always makes an act virtuous or
criminal you might not have intended what
I supposed you hinted at and as it respects
mine I candidly acknowledge some things I did
intend to shock your feelings and on more
reflection I believe it was not right and had
been better let alone for soft words always
surmount a way wrath and now if you will
be satisfied I will take back what you think
is so exceptionable But still to my understand-
ing there is something strange in your doubts
& fears you do know that it has been all ways
the decided opinion of Soule Morris & the Ohio
annual conference ~~and the~~ ^{and} and
the Brooklyn committee and your own, that the
Cincinnati conference is not subordinate
to the New York Book Concern but a coop-
erative one and has all the powers to set
that they have I took your letter & Road
through the Main to Lebanon & showed it to
Brother Soule and he did not hesitate to
say that he had no doubt but that you
had the same powers to act in the case that
the N York Concern had and this thing
I understood was settled as it respects the
question of the ~~West~~ ^{West} this was the ground of my objection

Middletown, N.Y.
March 25th
Meps
Wright & Swarnest
Cincinnati
Ohio
Recd 10

I have read the discipline again at your
request and more confirmed than ever that
my former opinions are the fact in the case
and I never expect to change them and as
we had acted on this principle it seemed
very strange that in this single case after
Bishop Doane's strong recommendation (and
as he does not recommend things until he is
persuaded they are legal) the Committee &
Editors & yourself. (I did not know that you
had drafted the resolution) all agreeing that
it was all perfectly understood and that there
was no room to doubt on my part that
it was a covenant made in good faith.
Your expression respecting its immediate forth
coming for the press to me seemed to imply
that it was as early with a some obituary
notice) but still I felt it to be a heretofore
task ^{of general} history of the western Indians with
their customs & subventions of nature. I would like
to know language like the Wyandots & the
Mojaves. Oh this is a work that cannot be
done in a week month or perhaps a year
Your expression in reference to a western tour
did come to me to ^{Indicate} ~~express~~ a fact that I
for no purpose was going to expend your cash
as if for some idle curiosity I would undertake
such a journey at your expense and ~~and~~
give you credit for all you say but still
think your letter might have been more happily
expressed I have no desire to quarrel with
you or any other person but my feelings were
wounded very much and I know of no better
way to do than to ~~scat~~ ^{scat} all out and
begin again for I never hoped to write to
anyone

one thing in your last letter I wish to correct
and that is in reference to my saying that
Bishop Morris had promised to help me
I said the other two had and that as Mr Morris
would it none the less I would try to
get him I have now only to say in conclu-
tion you can exercise your own judgment
about the matter I will not insist on your
bearing my expenses if you think it wrong.
and yet I am willing to comply with the
request of the Committee Bishop Doane offered
to bear all the expense of it himself and
we have made an agreement that if you
do not we will go in partnership and
publish it ourselves we will go together to
superintending as soon as the roads will
permit but this I want perfectly understood
that I will take my own time and use
what means I think necessary to make the
work complete It would greatly depress me
to wish to spend the funds of the
Church unprofitably I never have done it
and I have been trusted with thousands
of their cash, but at the same time I
want to live as well as others in New England
I now have by saying that a state of suspense
to me is all ways disagreeable and as soon as
you can conveniently I would like to know
whether you will sustain the expense of the
work or not -- and I hope you will have the
charity to believe me when I say that I
am sincerely your friend & not your enemy
all though I do sometimes say hard things that
had better be left unaided and hope my merciful
and omnipotent Judge will ever look thus on
an infirmity for it is one of my nature

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March 25, 1837 Ridgeville

Breathereen Wright & Swormstedt

This evening I received yours of the 21 inst and only have to say in reply that when I received your former communication was much excited at the _____ for it was so unexpected, and my temperemnt is warm at the hottest times and having been afflicted & serious I might have misconstrued your meaning and as Mother allways makes an act virtuous or criminal you might not have intended what I supposed yours hinted at. And as it respects mine I handedly acknowledge some things I did intend to hurt your feelings, and on more reflection I believe it was not right and had been better let allone for soft words allways turneth away wrath. And now if you will be satisfied I will take back what you think is so exeptionable. But still to my understanding there is something strange in your doubts & fier. You do know that it has been allways the decided opinion of Soule, Morris & the Ohio Annual Conference and the Book Committee and your own, that the Cincinnati Concern is not subordinated to the New York Book Concern but a cooperative one and has all the powers to act that they have. I took your letter & road through the rain to Lebanon and showed it to Bishop Soule and he did not hesitate to say that he had no doubt but that you had the same powers to act in the case that the N. York Concern had. And this thing I understood was settled as it respects the opinion of the West. This was the ground of my assertion.

I have read the Discipline again at your request and more confirmed than ever that my former opinions are the fact in the case and I never expect to change them and as we had acted on this principle it seemed very strange that in this single case after Bishop Soules strong recommendation (and he doesn't recommend things until he is persuaded they are legal) the Committee and Editors and yourself (I did not know that you had drafted the Resolution) all agreeing that it was all perfectly understood and that there was no room to doubt on my part that it was a covenant made in good faith.

Your expression respecting its immediate forthcoming for the press to me seemed to imply that it was as lovly wrote as some obituary notice but still I felt it to be a herculean task, a general history of the Western Indians with their _____ & subduction of nations. Tradition, customs, language for the Wyandotts and the Mission. For this is a work that cannot be done in a week, month or perhaps a year. Your expressions in reference to a western tour did seem to me to indicate a fier that I for no purpose was going to extend your cost for some dole curiosity, would undertake such a journey at your expense. And now I give you credit for all you say but still think your letter might have been more softly expressed. I have no desire to fallout with you or any other person but my feelings were wounded very much and I know of no better way to do then to scratch all out and begin again for I never harber ill will to any one.

One thing in your last letter I wish to correct and this in reference to my saying that Bishop Morris had promised to help me. I said the other two had and that as Br. Morris would [be] at home this summer I would try to get home. I have now only to say, in conclusion, you can exercise your own judgments

about the matter. I will not insist on your bearing my expenses if you think it wrong. And yet I am willing to comply with the request of the Committee. Bishop Soule offered to beare all the expense of it himself and we have made an agreement that if you do not we go in partnership and publish it ourselves. We will go together to Upper Sandusky as soon as the woods will permit. But this I want perfectly understood that I will take my own time and use what means I think necessary to make the work compleat. It would grate depravity in me to wish to spend the funds of the Church unnecessarily. I never have done it and I have been trusted with Thomson, of their cash, but at the same time I want to live as well as others in supply.

I now close by saying that a state of suspense to me is allways disagreeable and as soon as you can conveniently I would like to know wheather you will sustain the expense of the work or not-- and I hope you will have the cherity to believe me when I say that I am sincerely your friend and not your enemy allthough I do sometimes say some things that had better be left unsaid and I hope my Merciful and Omnipotent Judge will overlook this as an infirmity for it is one of my nature. Please remember [me] to Brs Elliott & Hamline and to all friends and enemies.

Your _____

JB Finley

Messrs Wright & Swormstedt