3-11-1837

Letter from Wright & Swormstedt to James B. Finley

Wright & Swormstedt

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Cincinnati, March 14, 1867

Gentlemen,

Your answer of the 24th inst. was received a few days since. But constant press of business has prevented our acknowledging it until now. We have very little light to act upon in reference to the subject to which you refer. Wherever you may have the right, you refer us for estimates, that may be necessary to pay for. We have been told that you are to purchase for your house next fall, as was agreed upon, and we are quite certain we have not the matter there presented as a subject of further consideration, and we have been advised by the Book Committee to contract with you for a specific amount of materials to build a book, or for the materials only, to make a book, or for the whole, and that we have been authorized to enter into the negotiation and make such a book. We have a letter written by Mr. Issacs, who is in London, and he is very anxious to have you as might have been concluded upon a mutual agreement.

Yours truly,

[Signature]
Brother Finley,

Yours of the 2nd inst was received a few days since but constant press of business has prevented our acknowledging it until now. We have very little light to communicate on the subject to which you refer. Whoever may have the right to estimate what may be necessary to pay for your house rent, fuel, and table expenses, we are quite certain we have not.

If the matter were presented as a business transaction, and we had been advised by the Book Committee to contract with you for a specific amount of materials to make a book, or for the manuscript copy made ready and prepared for publication, we might have been authorized to enter into the negotiation and made such a bargain with you as might have been concluded on by mutual agreement.

But as the case now stands it must be susceptible of various constructions and may be a source of some unpleasantness. We take the liberty to advise therefore, that you call the Book Committee together and have a distinct and explicit understanding in regard to this subject before you enter upon your journey. We make this suggestion that the subject may be adjusted satisfactorily to all concerned which we fear will not be the case if you proceed under the vague resolution “that your quarterly allowance and expenses be paid” out of the funds of the Concern.

You know it is very desirable to have that book brought into market as early as possible, and for ourselves, we can see no necessity for any journey for you to take except the one to Canada which will secure to you an opportunity of obtaining much important information which will have a direct bearing on the work. As to nations and tribes other than the Wyandotts, all that might be necessary of their history might be easily collected from books. We think it probable after a more mature reflection you will find a journey to the far west beyond the Mississippi unnecessary to the objects had in view.

Bro. Morris is expected at home the first of April or perhaps sooner. He would have some time we would suppose to assist you in arranging and revising your manuscript copy if you should have any part in readiness. Perhaps if you come down you may see him here.

We remain yours respectfully,

Wright & Swormstedt

At bottom of page, in Finley’s handwriting ???

1st Have the agents of the Western Book Concern authority by the advise of the Book Committee to apply the funds of the Concern to the purchase of the ms. copy of any new work?

2nd Have they the right to publish such a work without the concurrence of the “General Book Steward”