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Letter from John McDonald to James B. Finley

John McDonald

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[illegible]

What shall I say

what shall I say
But, ~~shall~~ of my old friends J. B. Finley and Peter Castright. What
they said was ~~inimitable~~. Their speeches would not suit any other mouths: no
one but old backwoods ^{men} could have spoken or thought as they did. In their
manner of debate, they were the only true representatives of the men who lived
on the frontier fifty years ago: they never learned the ~~art~~ of saying pretty, homely words to
please the ear or to ~~win~~ the fancy: men of independence, who stood manfully up to what
they believed to be right: without circumlocution or double meaning, they boldly
marched up to ^{the} subject, and spoke what they thought, independent of circumstances.
I have a peculiar respect for ~~courageous~~ men, I endeavor to be ~~courageous~~ myself,
and therefore take the liberty of saying to you, and to Peter, that ⁱⁿ my opinion you
were both wrong in the case of Bishop Andrews. Although we differ in opinion
on that subject, I hope ^{we} will never differ in our good will and friendship for
each other. I can truly say that I respect you just as much as I could do, if we
^{thought} alike on that subject, and otherwise believed alike in our theological creed.
"For forms of faith let quarrelers fight, he can be wrong whose life is in the right."

In my opinion the conference have done all the abolitionists could derive, they have
 carried their point, and been sorry for it. A division of the Methodist church in a
 political point, I consider of the most mischievous tendency, which has taken
 place in our country. They have shown how easy a division of the union
 of the states can be effected; they have even marked out the lines of separation
 and should I ^{not} feel of being elated (and I have doubt he will feel) The
 Southern States will follow ^{the} example set by the Methodist, and fix the lines
 of separation as the church has done; thus the church and states will be united in
 northern and southern confederacies, and jealousies and bickerings if not
 wars will ^{be} scenes of daily occurrences on the borders of the confederacies. What
 is done we know, what is in the future we can only speculate upon, and things
 which may ^{under} a gloomy aspect, may in the providence of God, turn out
 for good. Although we may doubt we should never despair. A new era
 begins. Great results have been effected in the history of our country.

The sermon the preacher in charge on this circuit has well recommended generally accepted. His colleague Mr. [illegible] was a young man, and his fair to be a useful one. His constitutional temperance appears as a happy model. No stiffness nor bigotry appear in his manner or deportment.

There is to be a compromising near us tomorrow
I would be gratified to hear my old friend I.D. Jr. at the station & see
of his old fashioned preaching, but I see by your arrangements of Quarterly
meetings that cannot be with res. can. you make it convenient in going or
returning from conference to give us a call. Love to all. Yours truly Wm. D. Smith

My daughter Maria Morgan, took over \$10 Winter goods fairly, he is now
little fellow, and like her name takes his share of self will and perversity.
about him. The other aspects of the babe he expects from you, but I suppose about
He says no more shall read it to you.

I have a correspondence with our mutual friend Mr. Marley. He writes an open candid and edifying letter. He is liberal in his views, without starch or bigotry; but ^{still} we find something ~~that~~ differs about. His theory on the subject of a trinity of gods appears to me absurd. Three unoriginated, uncreated Jehovahs making only one intire Jehovah, appears to me to look as much like nonsense, as any words which could be thrown together. To believe Jesus was ^{an} emanation from god, and thereby ~~was~~ the son of god, looks rational, and conveys to our senses an Idea of what is meant. Causing the word son of god, My wife is very particular in wishing ^{you} to remember her. My children and my oldest Grand children esteem ^{you} as a near Relation, and always speak of you, as old uncle Jimmy. Being much your debtor it is unnecessary for me to say how ^{high} you stand in my esteem.

John McDonald.

Rev J B Finley.

Although I am ^{not} an enrolled member of your church, yet
your people are my people. I prepared ^{an} ~~my~~ sermon which I delivered at the college
on the day of Independence to a large collection of people, and numerous sabbath
school children. I treated on the history of the past - the early means of acquiring
knowledge at ^{the} present time, compared with the age just gone by - the improvement
morals and manners - the advantages of the temperance reformation
and the introduction of the Sunday school system. As I did
not ^{touch} on the politics of the day, I am told by ^{my} friends, that my
address received the approbation of all who were present,
and they consisted of a numerous concourse of all parties, in
politics and religious.

Our wheat harvest has failed, we ^{have} but a light crop - our
oats and hay are fine, and our corn so far is promising. Politics is running
high, the jokers are using every effort, that slander and deception can
invent to carry their cause, but I think all in vain.

When you return home, tell your Child, and Grand children
that I love them, the ^{Indian} maxim, love me love my dog, is a good one. Tell Mrs
Spinley that we love her ^{very} much and long sine!

My son ~~James~~ ^{Ed} Morgan is clerk leader of the Sharon congregation. Out of 296 who joined our temperance society at Sharon, only two have returned like the dog to his vomit. That is what I call doing pretty well. The church is slowly increasing members, those who join the church from due deliberation are much surer of sticking, than ^{those} who join with a rush in an excitement. Having no more to say I will close these better sketched crude remarks
I McDonald

934.

P.S. Mr Louis Igoe, one of the pioneers, was buried yesterday. you must recollect
him well. In his manners he was not like any other in some respects. but he was an honest man.