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Finley Letters

James B. Finley Letters

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2-10-1845

## Letter from James B. Finley to Leroy Swormstedt

James B. Finley

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Tanesville Feb 10 A 1845.

Dear Bro Swarnsted I received your circular on the 9th Instant and have not had time properly to read that I might understand <sup>until today</sup> and after a most careful and deliberate perusal, I must return it without my Signature, or approval, for the following reasons. <sup>which</sup> if you should publish, in the western Advocate I request you to hand this letter to Dr Elliott, and request him to give it a place with the circular.

1<sup>st</sup> Object to the circular as it seems to me to constitute a board of Judges unknown in Methodism and that by a process very premature it would manifest on the part of the agents and commissioners an unbecoming anxiety and forwardness in this matter as if they were strongly desirous that there should be a division of the Methodist Church.

2<sup>nd</sup> <sup>say</sup> our Brethren in the South with a Bishop at their head <sup>say</sup> that they stand on the platform of Methodism we of the north profess the same thing then there is no need of division; and who knows but at their meeting at Lewisville next may that they may take into their heads to expel the South and general conference too then there will be no need of setting apart for them 3<sup>rd</sup> their annual conferences have not all voted on the alteration of the 6<sup>th</sup> article. Some have laid it over until they see what the South would do. and the votes of those who have voted would not be a fair decision of the case perhaps. Some of them voted against the alteration for this obvious reason they believed that the alteration was recommended only in case the South did secede and that organization should be announced; and not wishing to promote a secession from the Church would not tempt them to leave but after such a thing had taken place they might give their votes very differently.

How

Leary Swarnsted

business note

Thus

Leary

1845

Leary Swarnsted



4<sup>th</sup> I object to it; is the general conference directed no more  
of which the votes of the annual conferences might be  
ascertained so of course the agents & commissioners  
have no authority whatever to issue such a circular mak-  
ing the proposed request of the Secretaries of the annual  
conferences it looks to me too much like a self made  
Board of Judges who wanted merely to do something for  
which they have no more disciplinary authority  
than they would have to consecrate a bishop for  
the South if they should decide.

5<sup>th</sup> I object to it because it is wholly unnecessary  
that it should now be attended to for the whole action  
of the general conference in regard to a deviation of  
property proceeded on the fact that the South should  
secede and organize otherwise we have nothing to  
do with it at all and then not until there should be  
a constitutional number of votes to authorize such deviation  
and this cannot be lawfully obtained until the jour-  
nals of all the annual conferences are brought up to the  
general conference and a committee appointed officially  
to examine and report and any action on the part  
of the agents or commissioners, <sup>in this case</sup> would be without law  
and in my opinion leading by premature

I can only conceive of the power of the commissioners by  
the resolution of General Conference "That Nathan Bangs  
George Peck & J. B. Linley be and are hereby appointed  
commissioners to act in concert with the same number  
of commissioners appointed by the Southern organization  
(should one be formed) to estimate the amount which  
will fall due to the South by the proceeding nulls".  
This is all the power the general conference has  
authorized ~~in~~ exercise they have no where said you  
shall collect & count the votes of all the annual  
conferences and then determine whether

there is a constitutional majority in favor of  
alteration ~~or not~~. This is not our business and I  
beg to be excused from signing your call and  
although I am heart of all I will advise you all to  
let it alone  
J. B. Linley

P.S. I thank you for your kind invitation to  
visit your city but find it out of my power to  
do so in March ~~if~~ we have surmised that there  
is some danger on the Editor of the Advocate for  
as some think his too much leaning to the South  
but if they should attempt to remove or censure his  
manly defence of our beloved Methodism they will  
beard the lion in his den and that hand will wither  
if ever the Ohio Annual Conference meets they little think  
you have in Cincinnati boys of yesterday and old  
uncle Billy of their head must not suppose they can  
drive or divide the Philanthropy of Methodism in <sup>the west</sup>  
It has been taken more here in this country that  
the knees of I swarmed troubles and that he is more  
than half converted but told them no. It is not  
true he is not a man of adox. but we were all  
much astonished by Mr. Stetson's exposition the some  
of the Sir that left Virginia because of slavery  
and the man who stood up at G. C. like a man  
his milk and water dose was a matter of astonishment  
~~that he will see better after a while he must have~~  
been as those who dream God bless us all  
and save men from twisifications My love to  
all and now forever  
J. B. Linley  
Rev. Leroy Swannick