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James B. Finley Letters

5-15-1845

Letter from Michael Marley to James B. Finley

Michael Marley

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in the bright abodes of the "Heavens," where controversy will be unknown forever.

With love, in expressions of kindest regards
for yourself, and family
Rev. J. B. Finley, M. Marlay

Milford Ct.
May 15th
Harris
183
24th
Care of
Rev. W. A. Harris
Care of J. B. Finley,
Zanesville,
Washington Co.,
Ohio.

M. Marlay
July 1845



Milford May 15th 1845

Dear Bro. Finley,

Your friendly letter of April 29th came duly to hand and was perused with interest, and pleasure. I have been induced to write so soon, by some circumstances in which you are interested, and of which, I think, you ought to be informed. The Southern Delegates to the famous Convention, now in Session in Louisville, passed through Cincinnati on their way thither, and while in Cin. Dr. Capers exhibited a letter, purporting to have been written by you, in 1839, and which it is thought, holds sentiments differing widely, from those you now hold, I did not see any of the Delegates myself, but I have since seen the letter, and think it my duty to inform you of the facts. They were determined to publish it but were induced not to, do so by Dr. Latta, and others. By writing to Dr. Latta you can get a copy, or the original. And if it is a forgery, you can expose it. I will give you some extracts, from it that you may form some idea of its contents. It is dated Germantown, Octo-ber 1st 1839, speaking of the annual Conference, just closed and alluding to your being left out of the Delegation, the letter make you say, "One great charge brought against me was, that I voted for Bro. Capers for Bishop in 36, and if I was elected, I would do so again, which charges I did not deny, for I will not succumb, nor creep, to any man, or set of men, where I think I have acted correctly, Modern abolition is gaining ground fast, in our Conference, and Country, and every man must be proscribed for his opposition to it, I am a Southern man in feeling, and sentiment, and cannot go with the Yankees in their diverse measures, I very much prefer Southern Methodism, with all their Slavery, to the Methodist Politics of the North, in their Revolutionizing Schemes." "If our editors are fence men on the subject of Abolition, or such secretly, farewell to the Union of the Methodist Church, I want a Southern man for our Episcopates, and editors that will come out in opposition to this lot of all Sermons, (abolitionism) every man that,

was above Suspicion, on this Subject, is left at home, and now I wish the Gen. Conference may give us a Book-agent, and two Editors that will not seek this worse than Radical pier in our Church, and above all, keep out Yankees, and Irish Yankees,"—"I cannot help but feel when I see men flattering, flattering, flattering, and whining, when they are dark deceitful, and Hypocritical, and totally devoid of that manly independent Spirit which ought always to mark the character of a Methodist minister."—"I feel restless in my present situation in the Methodist Church, the principle of proscription for avowed sentiments is the order of the day, and if it increases as it has, I must pull up my stakes and get out of its pier for I never could swim in a washing tub, and I must go South to dry my bones." ~~But~~

This letter is to J. M. Bradley, I have not made these copious extracts for the purpose of remarking on any of them, for I don't know but that it may be a forgery. But if it should be your letter, there will be an effort made to turn Bro. Finley against himself. I know the circumstances under which you were placed at the close of that Conference. and the sentiments it contains are such as I held at this moment, except the Slaveholding Bishop, for free men, and Yankee Desertism, or Irish Yankees, are poor things, and Bro Finley these men are now, what they were in '39, only a little worse, I know you are not an Abolitionist, and I feel anxious, that while you draw the line, clearly between yourself, and Presbyterianism, that you would keep it equally clear, between you and Abolitionism, for this thing will have to be met by some men, whether the South go off, or not, and met too, in this Conference. I for one will oppose the address of this "Sermon" with all the decision that it may call for, and as quick as I would oppose the approach of Slavery to the Episcopacy, and I never expect to countenance the one, or the other, I suppose from all that I can hear of the doings of the Convention, that the South will go off. They have done nothing yet, save make inflammatory Speeches for Buncum. But are maturing their plans, several of our brethren have been down

and most of them have had their feelings wounded, Bishop Doane is very conspicuous in that Body. Bishop Morris, has firmly enough to decline any participation in the nefarious proceedings. God in my opinion cannot approve such doings, Wm. Laid in a Speech, that he would "vote for division of the Church, were he certain that it would result in a division of the Union." I envy not the man either his head or his heart, that could put forth such a sentiment in a meeting, (in a deco-face meeting it would be intolerable) of grave reformers in Church & polity. God save us, from such feelings, and sentiments and free us from such Dr. of Divinity.

See what a Spectacle we now present to the world while there are four fifths of the preachers, and people that are opposed to a division of the Church, and yet some 20 Drs of Divinity, have got this matter so mixed up as that no man or set of men can stop the thing. I wish to God you had all been asleep, when you voted for the Resolutions of the Committee of Mine. Had you done your business up after passing your Resolutions, and then come home, without giving them the Bone to know at, and have treated them, as a set of Radical Seceders, from the start, it would have been much better. However we will see what will be the end of the Battle of the Tubs, we have just received the intelligence, that Westlake, and Truth, were both dead, died within a week of each other, and both with this dreadful disease, Black Tanager, soon we will all be gone. and thus take our place. Lord help us to be prepared for the Change. permit me again to say keep your two edged sword unsheathed, and while you oppose Slavery being connected with the Episcopacy, do not even seem to strengthen Modern Abolitionism, for it is of unnatural growth as it is. I hope you will write soon again, and let me know whether this letter is a forgery or not. The Lord Bless you, and as Col. McDonald says, "Shore you long to serve the Church, and permit you to die easy, and give you a sweet resting place in