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James B. Finley Letters

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Letter from A. Riddle & Elizabeth Riddle to James B. Finley

A. Riddle

Elizabeth Riddle

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Cincinnati Nov. 4th 1845

Dear Brother

Your very welcome epistle of Oct. 14th came duly to hand. We were exceedingly happy to learn that you bore us in such kind remembrance, and that we had contributed, in the least, to your comfort, and happiness, during your short sojourn with us. We assure you that your sentiments of esteem, and regard, are fully reciprocated ~~on our part~~, and trust your prayers for our present and future happiness may meet with favor at a throne of grace. Surrounded as we are by the pleasures of life, and constantly coming in contact with the worldly minded, with whom we are compelled, (at least to some extent) to associate: we too often yield to the allurements of the world, and fascinations of life, and bring barrenness upon our souls. We ask, and need, your prayers.

Various and important changes have taken place since you left us. Some fifty, together with the illustrious few, who immortalized themselves in so signal a manner at Conference, have left the Methodist Episcopal Church, and formed a separate organization, known as the Southern Church. Mr. Maley has been the most efficient tool, for he was a spy in the enemy's camp, to lead off the unwary, under the guise of the missionary banner. As long as he dared he remained a "non-committal", he lacked the independence to define his position as fearlessly as Mr. Burk, Dehon, Lattin and others, but continued apparently favorable to both sides until the missionary board were about to decide for him, then for the sake of his pottage, he acknowledge himself southern

Rev. James B. Hendley
Zanesville
Ohio

in his views. He certainly possesses ingenuity, whatever else he may be deficient in, for I understand he has induced some weak brethren to look upon him, ^{almost} as a martyr, driven from the church of his choice by persecution. Madam Anna says they propose to have the cream of the Methodist society, or more properly speaking the aristocratic portions. Well I am thankful that I am not ambitious to be classed among them, for during our Saviors incarnation he was not of this stamp, and father & I know you will agree with me, when I say the "servant should not be above his Lord." There is a revival spirit in each of the charges here, the members seem to feel the importance of "coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty," and those who were appointed to labor here, still seem encouraged to "sound the alarm." I now close for the purpose of giving Mr. R. an opportunity of penning a few lines, knowing that he can interest you far more than I can. Hope to hear from you again.

Yours affectionately,

Elizabeth C. Riddle

My Dear Brother,

Your very kind letter above referred to by Mr. R. has been on hand & not answered for some time. You may be assured that our delay in not responding "amen" to your very welcome favor was not in consequence of our adherence to the "Church South" but in truth I relied upon my letter ^{being} sent to you - which would have promptly done, had she not been absent from home for some

P.S. I wish you to understand that the whole number of this Disconnected at Vine Street, number about 120.

eight days - Your future Epistles my brother, will be attended to without delay. It is now understood I believe, that the Church on Vine Street, under John Delaney will not be received into the Southern Connection. It cannot be done, without a violation of the whole plan. The Vine Street Society, is made up of the disaffected from various Charges - Say some 40 from Wesley, 15 from Morris Chapel, 12 from Asbury - 6 from 9th St. Charge - 3 from Ebenezer. The residue (in all about 120) from the County & City - persons who have withdrawn, been laid aside & otherwise disconnected with the Meth. E. Church. The Members & Preachers forming the above association are exercising their utmost influence, to take from the Old Ship, all they can get. They are not particular what means are resorted to, to accomplish the end. I am clearly of the opinion that a schism formed as the one on Vine Street has been, cannot exist long - although it numbers many respectable members. They would soon separate - ~~without~~ if Schism was not with them. I have not heard that any one has left our little Bethel, Bro White will succeed in that charge & do well. The Missions under him, promises well. We think that all the Charges in the City, will do better this Conference year, than for years past. The Membership are united. Brotherly feeling prevails. And there is a good prospect for a revival. Pray for Cincinnati - my Brother, we want your Prayers. For ourselves, we are on the "Old Ship", and by the grace of God, Bro Hindley, we intend to hold on to her. She is sea-scented & if faithful to her, will carry us with safety to the Haven of eternal repose. May God bless you and your labors. Write often. Yours in Christ, Elizabeth C. Riddle