

Copied

Mineral Bayou, Feb. 23^d 1848

Bro. Peter,

Your very kind letter of the 10th Inst. has been safely rec^d to hand; which I rejoice to receive at this time. Heretofore I thought myself alone in the great Contest for liberty of conscience & freedom of enjoying the rights of Property in our own Country as a free people. But your letter give me good encouragement that I must ^{not} ~~confide~~ myself entirely alone in the Struggle and that I must stand my ground & hold on. You cannot imagine what Courage & new feelings it gave me. It was like receiving a regiment ^{of} volunteers to my aid. I ^{once} thought my liberty gone & I left alone. Many causes made me think so. You are aware, how I have been always looked upon with prejudice by a great many of my people, which made me think I had no right to expect ^{any} aid from their ranks, in any thing. And again, I had conversed with almost all the leading men of our nation on the subject of the dangerous tendency of the doctrine of abolitionists in our country, but perceiving their utter indifference to it, I had concluded that my cause was a hopeless ~~one~~ ^{one} & was making preparations to retreat. - But you ^{in consequence} ~~was~~ informed ~~in consequence~~, when you heard that I had concluded to join the Methodists I have been examining their book of Discipline. To my great surprise I have found that Denominations to have been one of the greatest abolitional Church in the U.S. for these 60 years & though the North & South are divided on slave

But a great many of their preachers are fine men
entirely clear of the error of abolitionism - The
next book of Discipline I am going to examine
is that of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.
I do not wish to have any thing to do as a church
member with the Church which is under the sup-
port & control of the abolitionists of the North.

~~You was also mistaken about my having~~
another difficulty with Mr. Potter. I had
none. But you know him as a very bitter anti-slavery
man. With such a man I have no sympathy.
Mr. Kingsbury is the man who has talked to
me so much against my owning slaves. To
be sure others have shot at me with their
abolition balls & have wounded me very
seriously at different times. This warfare of
words have been carried on for three four
or five years wholly unknown to the world.
How could one stand against a dozen. I have
been whipt out, & have been seeking a temporary
refuge somewhere. If brother David had lived
no doubt we both should have joined ourselves
to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. For
we agreed to do so. My mind still bends that
way. But you wish I might not leave you.
I have no wish to run away from ^{you} neither
leave you nor any of my good friends. I want
them along with me. Now some ^{W.} years ago, Mrs.
said to me I must not leave them, I, of course
willing to make compromise, I told her if they
will not drop me, (me meant all my friends too)
I would not leave them. But I afterwards,

Kept up at me hotter & hotter, I than begged
to be let alone to the enjoyment of the liberty of
conscience & Mr. Wright wrote to me to be still
as there was no danger of the Board interfe-
ring in the discipline of the church in the
nation, for they had no right to do so. But I found
very soon this was all a mistake. For the Board
had many agents here. I was surprized to
think why Mr. Wright should write me such
a letter. I have been harassed, bothered
plagued, troubled & tired out
just as much as ever ~~not~~ having received
no word from Mr. Wright but one, & none at all
from ~~the rest~~, Mr. Byington or Hotkin, I had
no grounds at all to think they were on my side.
And as I was so sick & tired of the abolition
question, I have made up my mind to leave
the Mission church & join other church & then
the abolitionist may look out I am determined
to carry on my warfare more deliberately.
But you propose to expell the abolitionist
from our country & renian as we are in the
same church. Here I do not see how you can
succeed ^{well} in this. For all the Missionaries, Minis-
ters & all, so long as they are under the out-
put of the Board belong to the abolition party.
~~But~~ they are bound to go one way - for money is
power - But if I only could see any one
of these men, namely Wright, Byington &
Hotkin, if only one of them would be separated
from the Board & take an independent stand
then I would think there was chance for you to

under the support & direction of the Board
they cannot act with us. ^{they will} They may be our
influences the other way. They may be our
good friends in other respects, but if you touch
them with the penance that keeps them easy now
you will find them fly from ~~you~~ very quick
~~unless~~ I am very much mistaken in them, & that
they have greatly changed since I saw them last.
Money is the thing that rules every body. I wish to
belong to a church which has no connection
with the American Board or the Mission Church
in the nation, for they all are on with the
abolition party. Every Presbyterian church ^{in the na-} ~~is~~
in connection with that party. And how can
I remain with them unless a church is sep-
arated from them & be of one mind with me.
For I am determined to go away from the abo-
lition churches & ministers. I have no connection
with them whatever. For before many years
they will by their influence cause the negroes
to ~~rise~~ in rebellion in this nation, & there will
be blood shed sure somewhere. If Mr. & Mrs.
Wright, Mr. B. & Hotchkiss have expressed their
feelings out more openly to you on this question
it is more than I expected. Particularly Mr.
H. I had put them all together as one on this
point, only more liberal. A man of veracity
told me some time ago (not very long ago) what
remarks Mr. H. had made respecting
the slave holding members in the church -
which amounts to this; that they saw no
way but to turn us out of the church as the
abolitionists of the north wanted to be done -
I don't think it will be long before

held out to me, was, that the Chortaw
mission will be broke up - will be broke up
- will be broke up - if the slave holding members
remain in the church. I am sick of hearing
such non sense, disgusted with it - tired
of it - whose fault is it? - who re-
ceived the slave owners in the church?
If they once received us into the church
& if they are right ~~in~~ doing so - have
Bible authority for it, why not let us alone.
Why should they go against what they have
done. Why should they go against the scrip-
ture authority. They appear to be very
in consistent. And if the Missionaries are
right in receiving the slave holder into
the church & can find scripture for it,
the abolitionists at the north are perfectly
in the wrong for making objections to it -
so they are wrong, & the Missionaries are
in the wrong to be contended by them. &
since they have taken a wrong course they
are about to divide & confuse the church
in the nation, which I am truly sorry for -
Now my belief on the subject of owning
slaves, we have abundant proof from
the Holy Bible of the right granted to
buy ~~and~~ ~~men~~ ~~and~~ ~~women~~ to inherit
it & possess, our children after us
forever - this law never was repealed
by Christ neither by his apostles -
But sanctioned by their acts & writ-
ings - The abolitionists of our days
are in the wrong.

written in the scriptures. ~~...~~

I agree with you in your opinion that something must be done to drive out the abolitionists from our Country - It is important & very necessary, or else we shall be awfully entangled up & find ourselves in a bad fix - I consider the abolitionists to be a troublesome class of men, at war with the peace of the Community, at variance with the rights & prosperity & wellbeing of a people.

You are right in your views when you said, we are not dependent on the Missions (the northern folks) for teachers & preachers. It is but right ~~the~~ natives should know this.

It is also true, that ^{we} once thought we could not get along without them & we forgot ourselves & began to pay too much honor & utter flatteries to them & they have got a fancy.

I wish I could see you now & others of our band dear Chas. I have a great ^{deal} to say on this subject which I cannot well do so in this dry paper. - Now I would confer conversed with Mrs. W. & Mr. W. I know Mrs. W. is very keen eyed woman - & very accomplished & artful. I never could fully see & understand her real senti-

~~indeed~~ set sail ^{with} of all he learned,
flourishing, artful & accomplished way
of expression in reply to my ~~expressions~~
on this subject - However I never could see
any impropriety in it - It always im-
used me. She is the smartest of women -
I highly esteem her -

Now ~~that~~ head bro. Peter is
putting down the abolitionists in our country
And will not you find it necessary
to call a meeting of all concerned
to meet, in order to have our minds thrown
to each other & unite upon a plan
for an efficient & active exertions -
to unite is important - to understand
stand ~~each~~ other is very necessary - nothing
can well be done without it. I leave
this with you to manage down there

Now in conclusion, I will say
to you, that I shall not leave your church
if I see one minister of the old friends walk out
from among the ranks of the abolitionists &
take a ~~different~~ stand. I will shake hands
with him & stand by him. It is a minister I
want, one that is of one mind with me. But
~~now I do not know who is on my side. I~~
am not alone in these parts about leaving
the Mission Church -

Now write often & let us write
stronger & stronger with matters & information
on this subject - I was so pleased & affected
to tears when you spoke of things past to be forgiven &
I am glad how ever how sweet & how pleasant to

P. S. Confidential

Col. F. P. Fitzhugh
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