

10-6-1849

Letter from Edward B. Stevens to James B. Finley

Edward B. Stevens

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Recommended Citation

Stevens, Edward B., "Letter from Edward B. Stevens to James B. Finley" (1849). *Finley Letters*. 1182.
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Monroe - Butler County - Ohio, October 6th 1829.

Bro J. B. Finley; Grand Worthy Patriarch;

I will endeavor to make as brief a report as circumstances will permit - not to trespass on your time more than necessary. I have delayed this communication a few days beyond the Rule - owing to the fact that although appointed during the preceding Quarterly term my Commission was not received until a few weeks ago, and I was not very familiar with my field of work.

My Charge is Monroe Divis: 281. & Amanda Divis: 457.

The Quarterly Returns to the Grand Scribe exhibit the condition of these two Divisions as to relative numbers - increase - financial resources etc: I will only add at this time that both contain some of the salt of the Earth - the "true & faithful" workers of the order. Through the Region embraced in this Charge, as in common with all that part of the State I fear - there is a prevailing apathy in the entire Cause of temperance: I do not think there is a backsliding to olden things - but a sorry sort of indifference to the success of our principles. I think much - very much - of this is from an apparent want of any point to strike at - we can easily work men into the order - & reclaim them temporarily from the Cup - but the Devil has 10 agents fastened & protected by law to every agency of our order - and the contest becomes too unequal - hence our men seeing the fruits of their labour so often become wretched - that they are disheartened & without wonder.

I think then we must introduce some agency to labour for a Reformation of our Laws - we must be allowed to hear a voice in the sale of liquor before we can really effect much. - Such is certainly the presentation of temperance affairs with us.

2061 Still I cannot agree with those hasty ones who say - the "Order has accomplished its mission" - there is the same field of work and it seems to me we can accomplish good in the same way. - How we not grown a little bolder in action? - Some of us.

Nevertheless I think we might introduce many features that would add interest to the Indoors work. - Many are attracted within our Division Rooms by the glarity of Mystery, and do not find enough to gratify their curiosity & hence are easily dissatisfied with its the work.

A closer attention to the beautiful ceremonial usages of our Order would increase the interest & consequently the utility of our Order. — Inasmuch as most of Divisions have individual Deputies, I have thought to suggest an interchange of Officers: — Thus in Divisions A, B, C, & D let a Brother of A or B. officiate as Deputy in C & D, & vice versa = Arrangements of such a character however should of course be made with reference to Contiguity, but you have often seen as I have that Sub. Divisions are more gratified more attentive & more improved by the official visits of a brother not in ordinary attendance in the Divis. Room. —

I look to ^{the} universal dissemination of temperance ^{tracts} amongst our entire Community, in accordance with the suggestions of Bro. H. Geely, — as an object of the grandest importance: I look anxiously for tract No. 1. of that Series. —

May the Great Patriarch above give us all more grace patience and fidelity in this great cause of all mankind.

accept my best wishes for your personal welfare —

Yours in the Bonds

Edward B. Stevens.

Edward B. Stevens
of G. W. P. set No. 1

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