

Letter: Norton-Tappan

Farmington, April 4, 1841

My Dear Friend

My last letter from you is dated 19th ulto. You will have received another a day or two after it was written with satisfactory accounts of our African friends. I am happy to be able to confirm a favorable report. Since my last, their conduct has been very satisfactory. I do not see nearly as much of them as do brothers Deming & Williams, but I generally see them once a day. My son spends two hours with them every morning assisting Mr. Booth, so that I know pretty well how matters stand with them. I now think their docility truly remarkable. They have not, I believe, in a single instance tumbled for money since Mr. Booth and Mr. Codding had a serious palaver with them. They understand their position much better than they did and know their friends and place confidence in them. Kinna says "If our friends want us to go to a great meeting, I will do my best if all the world is present. A few evenings since Mr. Booth was detained from them later than usual & as they were inclined to retire, Kinna led them in prayers. Mr. B arrived soon after they began and discovered the scene & the prayer was truly affecting. He prayed themselves, Cinque in particular, for their friends, for their enemies for the Courts, for the Slave, the slaver holder and trader and for Mr. Pendleton, etc.

Their present situation is a very unfavorable one for their progress in study and I do not think it favorable to health—certainly it will not be when the weather becomes warm. Peah has been quite sick but he is now better; Cinque too, has had a very bad cold. We are quite undecided as to the best course to be pursued as to a house, and are hoping _____ to have something definite from your Committee. We are however decided about some things, viz., that it will be best to keep them together & that it will also be best to keep them in or near the Village. I can't now go into all the reasons ____ I hope that yourself, Mr. Jocelyn or Mr. Leavitt or all of you will come here before definite arrangements are made.

You speak of an interview with Dr. Anderson. I hope an arrangement will be made with the Board which he represents. It seems to me a providential opening & I think the responsibility of deciding it would be great. They could immediately appoint one or more missionaries who would devote themselves to teaching and at the same time learn the Mendi language.

Mr. Booth I believe does very well. The Africans like him. He does not contemplate going with them and wishes to engage only for six months. He has been much occupied ___ since he has been here with electioneering but after tomorrow I suppose he will devote himself entirely to his school.

Paragraph omitted

I must not omit to mention that about twenty-five of our friends attended sabbath school and church today. I did not see them at school but their conduct was strikingly proper in church.

John T. Norton