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are lawful for me but all things are not convenient for
us. We should not do a single thing, though it
may be lawful in itself if it give offence to any of our
Brethren. I know offences will come in the best Society;
but they will be attended with the most pernicious effects
upon those that give them. I have no wish that you
should for the want of any thing that your necessities
may call for, be under the smallest temptation to
private trade. This will prove a curse like the wedge
of gold in the camp of Israel. Let me then intreat you
to put away the accursed thing from amongst you. Perhaps
you may not all be convinced of the evils attending
upon private trade. It will turn away your heart
from God, and that spirit of meekness, of heavenly
mindedness which should reign amongst you will be
lost. You will not be able to love as brethren, nor
will you be kindly affectionate one towards another,
unless you be joined together in one spirit in the Lord.
God has been very gracious to you since you have lived
amongst the heathen. He has preserved you in all dangers
and your wants have been supplied. I wish to write to
you in the spirit of meekness, and to beseech you in
Christ's stead to lay no stumbling block in one another's
way. I have no private feelings to gratify, excepting
those of a Christian in my advice to you. After reading
all your letters and combining all the information, I
perceive there is something wrong amongst you, tho'
I could not tell where the fault lay. But I was
convinced it originated from private traffic, and from
this baneful root will many bitter evils spring up and