

John Pickering an Wilhelm von Humboldt, 25.05.1835

Handschrift: Grundlage der Edition: Boston, Public Library MS q. 1900, No. 35,
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Mattson 1980, Nr. 12459

Byington, Cyrus Fleming, John Ticknor, George Fleming, John: A Short Sermon:
Also Hymns, in the Muskokee or Creek Language (Boston: Crocker and Brewster
1835) Humboldt, Wilhelm von: Über die Kawi-Sprache auf der Insel Java, nebst
einer Einleitung über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren
Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts. In: Abhandlungen
der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin aus dem
Jahre 1832, Zweiter Theil (Berlin: Druckerei der Königlich Akademie der
Wissenschaften 1836)

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To Baron W.^m von Humboldt

[May 25. 1835]

Sir –

I send you by my friend [George Ticknor Esq.^r](#) (to whom I have given a letter of
introduction to you) two little Indian publications – 1. A short Sermon & Hymns,
in the Muskokee or Creek language; 2. A Cherokee Alphabet published in a large
size for the use of the Indian children.^[a]

I have been obliged to intermit my Indian studies for nearly three years past, in
consequence of being employed by the government of this state, with two others
of my profession, in the redaction of the laws of our state in order to reduce them
to a code. We have now almost completed this laborious task, after which I hope
to find a little leisure for other studies

I avail myself of this occasion to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging letter
of the 8.th Dec.^r last which arrived two months ago, but to which my pressing
engagements abovementioned <have not> permitted me to reply.

I am much flattered by your friendly request to prepare a memoir upon the subject
of the Indian languages; but I feel conscious that you estimate too highly my ability

a) [Editor] Wahrscheinlich ist damit die 42,8 × 37,1 cm große Tafel gemeint, die 1835 in Boston bei
Pendleton's Lithography gedruckt wurde, siehe James Constantine Pilling (1888): *Bibliography of the
Iroquoian Languages*, Washington: Government Printing Office, S. 72 s.v. Guess (George) mit Abb. [FZ]

to do justice to the subject. I shall not, however, [2*] lose sight of this object; & I may add, that our stock of materials is daily increasing. Our Missionaries are indefatigable, & study various dialects with zeal. One of them [Mr. Byington](#), has nearly, or quite, completed two very important works – a Dictionary & Grammar of the language of the Choctaws,^[b] now more correctly called Chahtas. Our Scholars are impatient to see your great work on the languages of this continent. I hope no accident has impeded its progress. I am also extremely desirous to see your work on the ancient political language of the island of Java; the General Introduction which you make to it^[c], on the languages of the Globe will be of the highest interest & importance to philologists.

When I read your last letter, I was sorry to learn that your health was not yet reestablis |hed.|^[d] I hope this is no longer the case^[e], and that your physical strength will enable you still to employ your eminent intellectual powers in the advancement of those branches of knowledge to which you have so largely contributed –

I am &.^c

Boston May 25.th 1835

b) [Editor] Die beiden Werke sind erst Jahrzehnte später publiziert worden; siehe James Constantine Pilling (1885): *Proof-Sheets of a Bibliography of the Languages of the North American Indians*, Washington: Government Printing Office, S. 111 zu Nr. 557–561. [FZ]

c) [Editor] D.h. die "Kawi-Einleitung". [FZ]

d) [Editor] Papierbruch.

e) [Editor] Humboldt war bereits am 8. April 1835 in Tegel gestorben. [FZ]