

S. Marsden to J. Pratt, 16 August 1813

Parramatta New S Wales

Aug^t 16 1813

Dear Sir

I am exceeding happy to inform you that I have received very late Accounts from Duaterra and that he is going on well. All the vessels that have touched there since his Return have been safe, and were supplied with every thing the Country could afford. Two young men, Sons of two Chiefs have arrived in the last Vessel from New Zealand. I expect one of them in a few days to live with me for a time. The way seems gradually opening for a mission to New Zealand. The natives are getting on with their Cultivation, and have now plenty of Maize, Pigs, Potatoes & other Vegetables [sic]— and the Wheat I sent a few months since I am informed is growing very well— Duaterra has a perfect Knowledge of the Cultivation of Maize & Wheat. Bread will be [f] a wonderful advantage to these poor Savages and be a means of preventing their civil wars. A young man, I have now at Parramatta (who has lived in New Zealand for about a year) learning to make Bricks— As he wishes to return, and seems a young man of good natural Parts, and a very kind disposition by nature, tho' not pious, I think he will be very useful at some future Period to the mission, when it comes to be established. I should have endeavoured to have begun the mission before now, had not the unfortunate Buisness [sic] of the Boyde [sic] happened. I was afraid if any thing serious should happen to the Missionaries I might have been blamed. I have no doubt, but the way will be made plain, and clear, and that we shall have the most friendly Intercourse with the Natives—

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Had there been a Vessel that could have been employed in the Mission much might have been done before now – I am [f] in Expectation of removing this difficulty in time, either by purchasing a Part of a Vessel myself, or of being able to hire one. I had much Conversation with Mr Hall to day one [sic] the Subject of the Mission. I wished him to devote his time to the Instruction of the two young men who have just arrived but I cannot prevail upon him to do this without incurring too heavy an Expence to the Society. He wants me to allow him £150 per annum for his Services – and Mrs Halls. I think this Sum entirely out of the Question, but he will not engage with me for a less Sum. Mr Hall is a pious man, and a man of great Knowledge as a Mechanic; but naturally of a stubborn disposition nothing kind, and tender in his Composition. In this Settlement he can earn much, with little Trouble, as the Price of Labor is so very high. He seems to have forgot for what Purpose he was sent out. He says he has no objections [f] now to go to New Zealand, but he does not seem to wish to go unless a number go with him. I informed him, that I expected the Society would call upon him to repay all the money that they had expended upon him when in England; and that he must prepare himself for such a just demand, unless he fulfilled his agreement with the Society. This he did not seem to like. He will still be a very useful man to the Mission as a Mechanic in New Zealand, and there he would be little or no Expence to the Society, if he was once settled there, for the Articles of Commerce such as Timber, Flax &c sent to Port Jackson would pay all Expences. He is a most industrious man, but will go his own way. Mrs Hall is an excellent woman, and will make a good missionary. I have

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an Intention of beginning to Instruct these two young Chiefs now in Agriculture, and to make an Axe or Hoe. Agriculture will make the way clear for the Missionaries— it will find Employment [f] for the natives, and furnish them with the means of Support. If they are only instructed in this useful Knowledge, New Zealand will become a great Country. I wish the Society would send me out a few Axes, Hoes — Spades, Saws common Knives— fish Hooks, needles, and those useful Articles for them as soon as they can. Axes, Hoes &c, are very dear here, and at the same time a few Tin Pots — and Iron Pots, and an hand wheat mill for them to grind their wheat. These things will be of infinite value to them, and will have the best effect. They will now give a large Hog for a small Axe and a Bag of Potatoes for a small bit of Iron Hoop, that they can fasten into the end of a Rod to work with. I think the natural [sic] Flax of New Zealand would be a valuable Article of Commerce. Any quantity may be got. Mr John King is not very well — he [f] has not been well for a long time back. I think he has some Family Insanity about him. He is pious, and goes on well, when he his [sic] well, but his mind has been affected both before and since his Marriage, and I am afraid of a return of his Complaint. I am looking out for the Missionary you mentioned in your last. I wish he was here now — he should begin his work immediately with the two men that are here till a further opening was made. All the Masters of Vessels I have seen and conversed with who have been at New Zealand are of opinion that the Missionaries will be perfectly safe amongst the Natives. I am convinced much has been done already towards the Mission— by that friendly Intercourse which is now

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opened: and by Duaterra and [f] one of the Priests living in my House. They have acquired a certain degree of Knowledge by joining in Family worship, attending constantly upon public worship, and by conversing with them upon divine Subjects. Their minds are prepared for further Instruction— I have enclosed a few Threads of the New Zealand Flax which was sent me a few days ago. Ship Loads of this Flax may be got at New Zealand sh^d. it be valuable— will you have the Goodness to request some Gentlemen of the Society to ascertain its value. I have sent it, as I received it. I think it would be turned to some good Account— and might also find Employment for the Natives to collect it. Present my respectful Compliments to the Society— wishing that all their Labors may be blessed—

I am

Dr Sir

Your obed^t[ien]^t humb^t[le]. Ser^t[van]^t

Samuel Marsden

Revd J. Pratt