

J. Pratt to S. Marsden, 18 March 1814

(Copy)

Secretary to Rev. S. Marsden

Church Missionary House,

Salisbury Square

March 18/14—

My Dear Sir

Your Letters of June 18th & 23rd 1813 have just arrived. They were laid before the Committee on Monday last. The prospects opening before us in your parts greatly encourage the Committee; while your report of the spirit and conduct of Mr Hall and John King much grieved them.

They and you have long since received, I hope, my Letters of March 22/13, sent by Mr Kendall; and we cannot but trust that the clear expression of the mind of the Committee concerning Hall and King therein contained will have induced them to fulfil to the utmost of their power those engagements into which they entered. I write to them by this conveyance. The Rev^d. D. Wilson who recommended John King to us, also writes to him. The Rev^d. Mr. Tracy Secretary to the (London) Missionary Society, told me the other day, that one of their Missionaries had intimated that John King was in a melancholy way.

We must do the best we can in these things. We are herein servants to Him who worketh by and through us all the counsel of his own will. In Kendall you will find, we trust, a most worthy man, steady to his purpose. It seems to me that Hall and King having learnt to maintain themselves during their long stay in N.S.W., and having perhaps began to taste the sweets of independence, [f]

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have fallen under temptation. I have but little fear of Kendall in this respect; but we must pray that he who falls may be recovered, and that he "that thinketh he standeth may take heed lest he fall."

I am directed by the Committee to assure you that they feel so deeply interested in the scenes of usefulness which are opening around you, that they are desirous of increasing the exertions of the Society in your parts. The prospects of Missionaries being raised up from among yourselves is particularly encouraging. We have lately resolved to take up the business of Schools, throughout the British Colonies and among the Heathen, on a large scale; and have opened a separate Fund for that purpose. You will be able, we trust, to find various persons, suited both by principles and talents, to act as Schoolmasters and Schoolmistresses either in N S Wales over children who have no care taken of them and are likely to have none, be they heathen or nominally Christians, or among the natives of New Zealand. Englishmen as you know cannot act as Missionaries to the full extent, till ordained. In this respect our Lutheran ministers possess a great advantage, as they can ordain any suitable native, as the Lutheran Missionaries under the "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge" have done.

The Committee beg that you will take immediate measures, in concurrence with your brethren and friends, for the formation of an Auxiliary Society which shall be our representative in your seas. [f] It might be denominated "The Auxiliary Church Missionary Society, in furtherance of the Missions of the British Church Missionary Society". The Governor, we trust, would become

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Patron, yourself president &c &c.— We wish such a Society to be in direct and exclusive connexion, with us at home. To our friends and brethren of the London Missionary Society we wish all success; but, for the preservation of perfect good will, and for the securing of our own consistency [sic] and of the Countenance of the Church, we find it expedient to act as separate and distinct from all other Societies—

On the formation of such a Society you are authorised to draw on me to any amount (at the Society's House, Salisbury Sq London) not exceeding £500 per annum, so long as it shall appear to the Committee here that the said sum is well employed, in promoting the object of the Society in your parts— We should be glad to have a separate account of such part of this annual ~~amount~~ Grant as may be drawn for in order to the establishment and support of Schools, as we keep that fund separate.

It has pleased God to prosper abundantly the efforts of our Society to interest our fellow members of the Church in its support. We have [f] this last year quadrupled I believe our income, chiefly by means of associations, in various counties, cities, towns and parishes and a still more important effect follows hereon than that of the mere augmentation of the funds. Multitudes begin to feel for the heathen and to pray for them & for us who are labouring for their salvation, and it is no small support to us, and will afford the same to you under all the crosses and difficulties of our labours for our Heavenly Master's cause— that we are remembered before him in many prayers— I will venture to say Therefore my dear Sir, that, wherever you shall make it appear that the

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proposed auxiliary can well expend in pursuit of our great objects, a much larger amount than that now granted such further sum will be granted— But we have good hopes, that on the embodying of your friends into such a Society, funds to a considerable amount may be raised among yourselves. Now it will be well in this case to give us credit for all such sums, making us debtors only for the grants, for this will connect your Society with the efforts which are making through out the world— I think you may take it for granted that we shall always give you so long as it can be well employed, far beyond the sum you can raise: that sum should be therefore [f] considered as part of our grant, so you will become not only active and energetic agents for the well applying of the Society's fund of Mercy and Charity, but you will gather for it a part of what you expend—

I need not say how important it will be to secure the conducting of the Society to such persons, as understand and enter into our views.

I hope we shall send you some Missionaries shortly— perhaps two English clergymen, or two Lutherans, if your Society commences with vigour and your prospects continue to enlarge, we may possibly send all four, in the course of three or four years— We have had of late much discussion on the subject of the vessel which it has been proposed to establish in your seas. Mr. Wilberforce in particular has much interested himself— The matter is now before the (London) Missionary Society. We have made a proposal to open a subscription for a Loan of three fourths of the Sum wanted, it being understood that you and your friends were willing to advance the remaining fourth— It is not thought that

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our Society can engage in the affair with any risk, and the directors of the (London) Missionary Society seem to have the same view with respect to themselves— Each Society [f] will lend £500 and the proposal is— that the parties lending the Sum, shall receive legal interest, but that you and your friends shall manage the whole and take profit and loss. Mess^{rs} Hall of Hull declines taking the management of any concern to be established here— all therefore seem likely to agree— that the vessel should be procured and entirely managed in your part of the world—

But you will hear more of this when we can speak more determinedly, and I am sorry that such delay has arisen as to prevent me from speaking decisively by this opportunity— The papers have been long with Mr. Hardcastle—

But if this scheme should not succeed, I am not without hopes that the proposed auxiliary society may lead in the end to the establishment of a vessel connected with our own Society—

I send herewith to Mr. Kendall a continuation of the Numbers of the Missionary Register, so as to make up what went before, 50 complete setts to this time— I hope all will arrive safely— You will please to take what you may wish— Lest however my former numbers should have miscarried I send you more to Complete Setts. [f] If a larger supply than what is sent should be thought advantageous to our design, they shall be forwarded— 12 Copies of our last Report and 12 Summaries are also sent—

May God abundantly bless you and us in all our endeavours to advance his blessed cause in the world—

MS. 54/32

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Believe me my D^r. Sir

Yr Affec[tionate] f[rien]d

(Signed) Josiah Pratt

PS Any kindness you shew to a convict named George Garrett, will be considered a favor by some of our friends—