

Mar. 25/14

331 Mr John King would have accompanied us in our present voyage, but as we do not intend to remain at New Zealand it was not deemed necessary for him to go. He waits to hear our Report.

We set out for New Zealand under the persuasion that there is now a fair opening for the exertions of the Society. The natives are much superior in point of mental capacity to any savages I have yet seen. They are very industrious, desirous to learn the European arts and solicit instruction. The People of England thro' a natural prejudice in favor of their own countrymen can dwell upon the cruelties and savage habits of the natives of New Zealand; but the time is now arrived when they must learn of the cruelties of men who bear the Christian name amongst those very savages; and this from official documents supported and established by respectable witnesses. We heard in England of the massacre of Captain Thompson of the Boyd and his men with horror. There can be no argument advanced in favor of cruelty. Yet at that time we were not told the whole of the truth, nor the circumstances which led to that fatal catastrophe. In previous times, some of our countrymen had been committing great depredations at New Zealand. The tops of a field of growing Potatoes had been pulled up by some British Sailors. The stores had been broken open by force when there could be nothing found in the fields, and the potatoes which the natives valued and wanted, and which they had preserved with great care for their own support until the ensuing potato blight had been verolently taken away. Add to this, that Captain Thompson had very ill treated three young New Zealanders when he had on Board the Boyd.