

S. Marsden to J. Pratt, 22 September 1814

Parramatta, Sept. 22nd 1814

Dear Sir,

I beg leave to submit a few observations to the Kind consideration of the Society, relative to the Society or some christian Friends in connection with them, maintaining a Vessel in New South Wales for the sole purpose of promoting the Good of the Mission intended to be established in New Zeland [sic]. In the first place the comfort and safety of the Missionaries, will at least for some time require a vessel to visit them, entirely under the direction of the Society's Agent, or some Christian Friends. Secondly, nothing would contribute so much to the civilization and improvement of the Zealanders, in all useful Knowledge, as a free and open communication with Port Jackson. Men from report can form little Idea of the comforts of civil Life, these comforts are so far out of their reach, that when they are told of them, they can give no credit to the Relation.

Thirdly, The wanton acts of oppression, Robberies and Murders committed upon the Persons and Properties of the Natives of New Zealand; have compleatly destroy'd all confidence in the Europeans. They manifest every wish to cultivate our Friendship; but woeful [f] Experience has taught them not to trust us too much. Nothing but a practical Knowledge of the English Christian's character, can remove remove their prejudices and Jealousies. If the Society's or any Christian Friends had a Vessel wholly under their own directions, in which the Natives could freely pass from New Zealand to Port Jackson, and back again to their own Country, and be kindly treated while on

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their Voyage, and cordially Received on their arrival, a most favourable Impression would soon be made upon them, as they are naturally a very Superior Race of Men, of very quick and comprehensive Minds. If such arrangements could be made, every reasonable Hope might be entertained that the greatest success, under the Divine Blessings, would attend the Missions [sic], but if no measure of this Kind is adopted, the Mission may still succeed. Yet according to human Estimation, the prospect of success will not be so promising. I admit the expense will be very considerable when Provisions, Naval Stores, and Seamens wages are very high. The Annual Expende of the Active I Estimate at £1500 p annum, as near as I can form an Idea. I have no doubt but the Timber &c. &c. which the [f] Active would bring to Port Jackson, would make a return of £1000 p annum, and probably more. She might clear her own expences. After I have visited New Zealand and examined its natural productions I shall be a better Judge, however the object is of infinite [sic] importance. The whole Inhabitants of that great and populous [sic] Island, are literally siting [sic] in darkness, and in the Region, and Shadow of Death; Should the Natives of this Island thro' the blessing of God be subdued by the sword of the Spirit to the Obedience of Faith, all the Neighbouring Islands will be likely to fall under the same Almighty influence, as they are inhabited by a race of Men, who speak the same or a similar Language. New Zealand must be always considered, as the great Emporium of the South Seas, from its local situation, its safe Harbours, its Navigable Rivers, its fine Timber for Ship building, its Rosin, native Flax &c, &c, Specimens of which I intend sending to

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the Society by this Conveyance. I trust the Society will not be discouraged on account of the weighty expences that will necessarily, and unavoidably attend the first Establishment of the Mission.

I have no doubt but the great Head of the Church will provide, "as the Gold and Silver are his, and the Cattle upon a Thousand Hills"; I shall feel it my duty, as [f] well as pleasure to give every support to the Mission, as far as my Personal Exertions; my pecuniary means, and my influence in this Colony will extend. I think the owners of South Sea Whalers will readily contribute to the aid of the Society in the present instance, as their Ships upon the Coast of New Zealand may safely put into the Bay of Islands, and obtain such refreshments as they may require, when once the Missionaries become resident there, and be under no apprehensions of their Crew being cut off, whereas, at present they are in considerable danger.

I need not point out to the owners of South Sea Whalers how much it is in general against their Interest for any of their Ships to put into the Harbour of Port Jackson for Refreshments. Their Captains and crews are almost certain to be ruined, from the dangerous connection which they form in New South Wales. I consider it would be greatly to the pecuniary advantage of all those concerned in the Sperm Fishery to give every support to the Mission at New Zealand. I also think His Majesty's Ministers, will will [sic] take the Mission into their favorable consideration from the official communication, which [f] His Excellency Governor Macquarie intends to transmit. Governor Macquarie is fully satisfied that much may be done for the improvement of the Natives of

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that Island; and has given me his full sanction to visit the Island with the Missionaries, and the Chiefs who are at present living with me. His Excellency has been kind enough to victual the chiefs, and their attendants from His Majesty's Stores during their stay in this settlement, which is the most favorable testimony of his approbation, and will very considerably lessen the Expences of their support. His Excellency hath further manifested his good will by promising on the Natives return to present each of the chiefs with a new suit of cloths [sic], their Coats to be made of Scarlet cloth, and each a Cow from His Majesty's Herds. From what has taken place, and from present Appearances I trust the Society will be fully satisfied, that there is now a fair opening at New Zealand for the introduction of the everlasting Gospel of our Blessed Lord, and I most ardently pray [f] that the Attempt may not fail for want of pecuniary assistance, and am confident it will not.

With my most respectful comp[limen]t^s to the Society, I beg to subscribe myself

Rev^d Sir Your most Ob[edien]t

H[umb]l^e Serv[an]t

Samuel Marsden

To

The Rev^d J. Pratt,

Secretary to the Church

Missionary Society –