

Samuel Marsden to CMS Secretary Josiah Pratt

Parramatta, Sep^r 26th 1818

Rev^d & dr Sir/

I received your Letter under date of March 12th 1818 with feelings which I cannot express. I feel myself under infinite obligations to you for your exertions in my Favor—It will be unnecessary for me now to advert to past Circumstances at any Length.— but beg to refer you to the Communications I have already made. I hope the Violence of the Storm is now over. It was not my Intention to have brought M^r Campbell to the Bar of Justice, if I could possibly have avoided it— I felt myself totally unequal, (under existing Circumstances) to the danger and difficulty of such a measure, on political Grounds, and on Christian Principles I was more unwilling to take such a Step. But as Solomon justly observes “Oppression maketh a man mad”, so it was with me. I did not feel for myself, so much as I did for the important Cause of the mission— I was fearful from opposition, it might be crushed in its Infancy. The Remoteness of this Colony was also a serious Consideration— Communications from the Society were uncertain, from the length of time, and the dangers of the Sea: I could only see relief at great distance; and before that relief could come the Enemy might have gained much advantages. [f] Our late Judge Advocate (Ellis Bent Esqr) and I were very intimate: I esteemed him much, he was amiable, learned, wise, prudent, and a Judge, a just man— I had seen him sink into the Grave at the Age of 32 beneath the weight of Anxiety. I knew the State of his mind, and what he suffered— One day when we

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were alone, he related to me the following Circumstance. In Consequence of some unhappy differences between him and the Gov[erno]^r he had been much distressed for a long time. One day the Anguish of his mind became intolerable he walked about for Relief; he took his Horse and rode out and used every means the whole day to relieve his distress but in vain— In the Evening he fell prostrate on the Floor, in the Room where he was with M^{rs} Bent. In a very few weeks after this he sank into the Grave. With much feeling he described his Anguish of mind to me. From various difficulties I felt a similar sensation increasing in my Breast. At length my Anguish was such as no Pen can describe— and corresponded with the Feelings of my departed friend, as far as one man can communicate those Feelings to another. When I retired to my Bed weary in Body, and mind, I found my Sleep, was departed from me, and I could truly say 'wearisome nights were appointed unto me.' I had no pain of Body, but the Vital Strings of the mind were ready to break. I could not account for the Anguish I felt as nothing gave me Relief— Some of the Psalms of David were precious— I believed the promises to be true, and that our God w^d [f] in the End overrule all for Good, yet this did not relieve my Pain. My wound was incurable. Neither reason, nor Religion could relieve my mind. I was apprehensive some serious Consequences would follow, as my Spirits sank; and I could not sleep. I had seen my friend (M^r Bent) under similar Sensations fade away suddenly, and wither and die and was fully aware that I must have relieve [sic] from some Quarter, or I could not support the weight of my Anxiety. Persons

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who have never been exercised in such a way may accuse me of weakness, of Folly, and Impatience: and perhaps not unjustly. In the midst of all I felt Satan's fiery darts. I was not surpris'd at men committing Suicide, if left to themselves for a moment, under such anguish as I experienced. I often repeated "O Lord I am oppress'd undertake for me." Seeing no possible way of obtaining Relief; but a Prospect of greater Trial, which I was apprehensive I could not meet, I resolv'd by one desperate Struggle to free myself from the hand of the Oppressor, or fall in the attempt. With this determination I waited upon the Judge Advocate, and told him what I was resolv'd to do. He seem'd astonish'd, and started every objection to my bringing M^r Campbell to a Court of Justice. I told him that I had no Intention to have prosecuted M^r Campbell for the Letter "Philo Free",— I would have put up with that gross Libel— but I had no Peace— every thing was done to oppose me, and that continually, in the Cause of the Mission, and that he must know. [f] I told him what I was suffering at that very moment by the detention of the Active when ready for sea, till the Bonds were drawn up for me to execute, binding me to pay the debts, of three poor Savages who had only been a few weeks in N.S. Wales and had lived at my Table all the time and did not owe a Penny. I also told him that I thought it a very hard case that I sh^d be compelled to pay for Bonds at his office for men who owed nothing who were not connected with the civil world, and had only come on a visit to me, and had been maintained at my Expense— The Judge Advocate felt the Injustice and said he would return the money, but this has not

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been done. He wished to prevent me from appealing to the laws of my Country. I told him, my mind was made up on this Subject and whatever was the Consequence I would not change my Purpose. I knew my Conduct was correct, & I should defy the Colony to say the contrary. I now prepared myself to meet all that Power Influence, Law and Cunning could do. My mind now was relieved – I had determined upon the Line of Conduct I should pursue – I had but one Point to carry; which was to convict Campbell of the Libel – If I convicted him, my own Reputation would be publicly vindicated, and Campbell if not conquered would be very much crippled in his future Attacks. Few men I believe had had a more difficult Task to [f] perform than I had when I brought Campbell to trial. The Judge my determined opponent and he supported by all the weight, and Influence of Persons in Power, with a military Jury, officers who had just arrived, and were not aware of the local Circumstances of the Colony, and therefore more easily have up their opinions to the Law officer: and have since regretted that they suffered the Judge to treat me in the manner he did, and my Cause – He tried me for three days, and not Mr Campbell. He hoped to find some Cause of Accusation against me, but he found none. How far my friends may approve or condemn my Conduct in the whole of this affair I cannot say. I have from time to time given you every Information that appeared to me necessary. I have no doubt but all will be well in the End. I have passed the Ordeal now. My Spirits are greatly relieved: as I think the Enemy can do me no violence. The measures the Committee have adopted are

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very consoling, and I do most sincerely return the Committee thanks for their kind Consideration, and the Honor they have done me in their vote of Thanks, and for the Confidence they have placed in me – I have to request that you will assure the Committee, I shall make it my constant Study to promote the object of the Society, and to do all in my Power for the temporal and eternal Interest of these poor Heathens – [f] I have six young men with me now; three returned in the Active to New Zealand – who had lived with me some time – Two sailed for England in the Claudine, about six weeks ago. As I sent the Spelling Book to get printed, I thought these young men would assist in correcting it while they remained – and as Captain Welsh kindly offered to take them to England, and to bring them out soon again without any Expense to the Society I embraced his offer. It is not my Intention to allow any more to visit you. It will be of infinite Importance to continue the Establishment at Parramatta for the natives of New Zealand – which I shall now improve, and place upon a larger Scale. I hope to keep the Expense within a very moderate Sum as far as may relate to the establishment as it is my Intention to employ the New Zealanders, partly in Agriculture & Gardening, and partly in learning the simple Arts mixed with moral and religious Instruction, which I shall be able to attend to in part myself. The Settlement at the Bay of Islands I hope will now be much less expensive as their Buildings are all completed – Land cleared for Cultivation sufficient for their own Support. Circumstances may occur which cannot at present be foreseen which [f] may

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require more pecuniar [sic] Aid. I am happy to say every thing relative to the mission has gone on well— The brethren are now united, and live in Peace— I have received very good Accounts of them from the Masters of the Whalers who have come to port Jackson. I believe no unpleasant Circumstance would have occurred at N Zealand if M^r Hall had not against the most possitive [sic] Instructions, and in violation of his Promise to me, removed to Whytangee. M^r Kendall I have always admired— his Conduct has been most Christian like— He is wholly engaged in the work and is much beloved by the natives. I hope they will all now do well. Their difficulties are now over— and their privations, inseparable from a new settlement, are now removed: so that there can be no Cause of difference— Men are seldom prepared to meet all the difficulties of a new Situation, and more especially in a savage nation— I made great allowance for them at first, while at the same time I was convinced, that they must be compelled to unite in the work, or give it up— my Letter to Mess^{rs} Hall & King upon that Subject had i[t]s proper effect— I have received with Pleasure the Information, that a Clergyman intends to come out— [f] This will be of infinite Service to the Cause, if the Gentleman has counted the Cost. It will be well for him to remember that when he leaves England for a Savage nation, he leaves the goodly Land of Canaan, the Land flowing with milk and Honey— I say not this to discourage any one, but merely as a Caution. I would go myself was I disengaged, tho I am fully aware of the difficulties. The Field of usefulness is extensive— and a Labourer will see the

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fruits of his Labors every day. He will see the Heathens around him improving in knowledge and Comfort; and the way of the Lord preparing – I have not seen my Colleagues since the arrival of your Letter – we will take the first opportunity of taking it into Consideration. From my former Communications you will learn that I have retired from the Magistracy – I have now nothing to do with the great men, and the politics of this world, which is no small relief to me. I live retired from the great – and hope to continue so – I should have been in England by this time, could I have obtained Leave of Absence for Reasons stated in a former Letter on the Subject – As the Cloud rests upon the Ark I shall not move again till I see the Cloud move. The Colony is much distressed for the want of Clergymen but as the Executive Authority requires me to remain at my Post. I quietly submit. The Supreme Magistrate is God's Minister and I am bound to obey him in all lawful Commands – I shall rejoice to see my New Zealand Friends Tooi & T[eetere] return – I have the honor to remain Dear Sir Your most grateful & obliged Ser[van]^t

Sam^l Marsden

Rev^d J. Pratt –