

Thomas Kendall to CMS Secretary Josiah Pratt

Bay of Islands Dec^r 18. 1818

Rev^d Josiah Pratt

Rev^d and Dear Sir,

I have formerly acquainted you that during the first two or three years residence of your Missionary Settlers at this place, we have never been visited with a number of natives exceeding, in our opinion, two or three hundred at a time. I have now to inform you that in the course of the last twelve months we have been visited by much larger parties. In the month of March last Fifty War and other Canoes containing about one thousand persons were at this Settlement. When numbers of natives are about us they are often very troublesome, it being a difficult matter for the chiefs who are most friendly to our interests to keep their people under constraint. I conceive our trials will be much heavier for some years to come, than they hitherto have been, the cause [f] of which apparently arises out of this circumstance "that the Native Spirit has "been roused by the long intercourse of the natives with Europeans, but none of "them having been converted to Christianity, the native heart with its blind "attachment to the most barbarous customs remains unchanged, and inclines its "possessor to pursue them with additional vigour." In the first year after our arrival many New Zealanders died. They had not food sufficient to keep them alive, and in this weak condition we could discern but little of the native mind. Since then the natives in general at the Bay of Islands, and parts of the country adjacent, eager to procure implements

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of war, and implements of husbandry, have exerted themselves so much in cultivating land for Potatoes, Indian Corn &c &c that they have [f] not only obtained such articles as they wanted, but have lived much better themselves, and there has been but little mortality. Their native disposition has of course been greatly revived, and being heathen still, they follow the customs and traditions of their forefathers with avidity. War is all their glory. They travel to the South, and kill great numbers. Almost the whole of the native men belonging to this bay are now gone to Battle. Although the natives in general shew no disposition to injure us, yet being so unsettled and unsteady, our situation amongst them is more trying and uncomfortable.

With respect to our own conduct we have hitherto been strictly neutral. We have made it our constant practice to be kind to strangers, and whilst we continue to be still I am under no fears whatever respecting our personal [f] safety. But we require at this time not only the assistance of our Heavenly Master, but support and encouragement from our christian employers. The constant sailing to and fro of the Active and steady supplies for the settlement are essential to our comfort, and to our progress in duty. It is the ultimate object of the Society that must be our chief aim. Without a regular intercourse between this Country and Port Jackson and steady supplies for the settlement, I should contemplate nearly the same disastrous events taking place, as formerly with the Missionaries at Taheiti. Again, until the Word of God is graciously revealed to this people a firm footing amongst

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them will not be obtained. They may be conciliated by temporal kindnesses, but there is nothing that can secure them permanently to our interests but the blessings of the Gospel. [f] Should the Committee consider the School, as I think they will, it would be right to encourage all the Missionary Settlers without exception to employ their leisure hours in the School. The School House is large enough for two, three or four teachers at a time. I wish for my colleagues to interest themselves both in procuring supplies for it, in teaching it, and in seeing how the trade allowed for the School is expended. I wish from my heart to be enabled to prove to them all, that my views are disinterested and not mercenary when I so earnestly importune for the liberal boon of the Society in behalf of the children of New Zealand— I have the honor to remain

Revd & Dear Sir

Your faithful Serv[an]^t

Tho^s Kendall