

T. F. Buxton to Samuel Marsden

Hampstead near
London May 7 1819.

My dear Sir

Though personally unknown to you your character & conduct with regard to Botany Bay & New Zealand & the hardships you have endured from persons in Authority are very familiar to me, & have excited in my mind a lively interest & desire to rescue you from the oppression of those, who hate you and the cause in which you are engaged & Providence has happily given me the opportunity of assisting in a work which will I trust relieve your mind from that deep anxiety which your Letters to our excellent Friend Pratt so feelingly disclose.

In March last, a Committee of the House of Commons (of which I am a Member) was appointed, to investigate the whole subject of prisons & with this the question of the situation of Botany Bay was closely connected. We have entered into that subject very minutely. — I send you & beg your acceptance of so much of the evidence as is already printed, (at least as much as I can this day collect, for Mr Pratt tells me the Vessel which will carry this, sails tomorrow.)

Some other persons have been examined Mr Bent for instance. And upon the whole I can assure you that not a word has been said which casts any reflection upon you — on the contrary — all that has been stated has raised your character & proved that your conduct has been such “as becometh a Minister of the Gospel of Christ.”

Be assured of this — you have friends in the Committee who will guard your reputation as if it were their own. Mr Wilberforce Mr Bennett & myself all feel

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that it is [f] with us a matter of sacred duty to protect you from that gross injustice to which you have hitherto been exposed. I value my situation as a member of that Committee upon many grounds, – but upon none more, than that it has enabled me in some small measure, to befriend & to console a worthy man who has almost been weighed down by arrogant oppressors. – And I do feel a degree of just indignation against those who have inflicted so much suffering upon one, whose motives & conduct have been so pure & exemplary, which will forbid me to abandon your cause. – I think it very possible that the whole subject will be discussed in Parliament – & if so – by the blessing of God on that day you shall not want an Advocate.

I am with the truest

Respect

Your friend

(Signed) T.F. Buxton

P.S. Since writing the above, Mr Buxton has sent all the Minutes respecting New South Wales yet printed, and I have enclosed them.

J[osiah] P[ratt]