

Samuel Marsden to CMS Secretary Josiah Pratt

Parramatta March 11th 1822

Rev^d & Dear Sir,

Last night I received your Letter of the 20th of Aug^s for myself and the Settlers at New Zealand—I wrote to you very lately when Gen^l Macquarie returned and also by the Grace— From these documents you will learn the State of things— Satan and his Agents are doing all the mischief at New Zealand they can; but the Kingdom of our Lord will prevail— The Prince of Darkness will lose his dominions there, and the Kingdom of Christ will be set up in spite of human weakness, or wickedness— The Storm is over in N.S.Wales, as far as relates to the higher Powers— Gen^l Mac[quarie] got hold of the Rev^d J. Butler, and made his last great Attack thro’ him upon me— M^r Butler’s Letters will shew, as well as his whole Conduct what a Flame had been kindled in his mind— M^r Butler would have treated my Colleagues with the same Contempt as he did me, if they had had any thing to do with him, as I had— The Rev^d M^r Hill informed me, M^r B. seldom came to Church when [f] at Sydney; and tho’ invited to dine with him, he never did— I lament these things very much; but they are evils that cannot easily be remedied— M^r Butler is one of the most violent and unreasonable, and rude men I have ever met with in the Religious world— He would wish to charge me with many improper Acts, but he only puts Questions; asking me if I had not done this and that— He dared not in direct Terms say I had done what he wished to insinuate— His Letters are wicked Letters— any Person reading these Letters who

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was not acquainted with his Character would conclude that it was Mr Butler's Intention to charge me with doing all he has stated— when the Rev^d Mr Williams Missionary at the Society Islands, who happened to be at Sydney, asked Mr Butler how he came to make such Charges against me in his Letters— he replied he had made no Charges— he had only asked if I had not done such and such things— I knew the moment I read his Letters he had taken this artful way to provide himself an Hole to creep out at— He knew I had not done [f] what he would make the world believe— I know I have a good Conscience towards God— My object has been and is to promote the Good of the poor Heathen— and God has blessed and will bless the means of his Grace to the Salvation of the poor Heathen— I had many a Battle to fight with the unprincipled Missionaries at the Society islands for years— and the London Missionary Society despaired of Success after they had expended many Thousands; and frequently wrote to me on the Subject, expressing their Fears that they must give it up, and sometimes their wishes— as the Rev^d G. Burder can testify— I never had but one opinion relative to that Mission, and that was that it would succeed— and God has blessed the work of his Grace to thousands of the poor Heathens in these Islands— Many of the first Missionaries sent out by the Society turned out very bad men, from these I had always my Share of abuse— They wrote to their [f] Respective Friends against me, and to the Society— Some of them became Drunkards and Thieves and Whoremongers; and fell off by their Crimes from the Society one after another in time— The faithful

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Missionaries were greatly distressed and discouraged and repeatedly left the Islands in despair with a full determination never to return— Amongst your Missionaries there is a mixture, which time will reveal— There are some exceeding Good men— if they leave their work for a while, this must not be wondered at— When Men's Spirits sink within them, and they are unable to support their Feelings; they must be allowed a little Respite— The work is great. The Labour difficult; and if there is not one man able to take the Helm in the Storm, all are cast down— I am sure you will see what the humble pious man must suffer under such a Temper as the Rev^d Mr Butler— I am well acquainted with their private Feelings and I know what they do suffer—

If Mr Butler will make use of such low Language [f] to me, who am wholly independent of him, what will he not do to those are compelled to live with him? When the Missionaries were going to build their Houses at the Settlement I begged Mr Butler to have his built first, as I knew if he did not, this would be productive of the greatest differences from the Violence of his Temper; and his jealous disposition— he would not take my Advice and the Consequences have been very unpleasant to many— Mr B. complained of want of Respect and Comfort, and many unhappy evils sprung from this Source as all the Missionaries can testify— Mr B's mind is as unsteady as it is violent— My own opinion is, that Mr Butler has long been tired of a Missionary's Life— and he has shewn great Anxiety to get out of the Society's Service— He has often complained of his Salary, that it was too

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small – and reminded me what a good Situation he left in London when he joined the Society by which he sustained great Loss – he seems never once to have counted the cost before he entered on his work – which makes the smallest thing [f] painful for him to bear – Let not the Society be discouraged – The work will go on – Let them weigh Facts – Let them ask what Injury have the Natives done the Missionaries? What Robberies have they committed? Mr Butler represented things in the most alarming Light when he came – A Stranger would have imagined all the Missionaries would have been killed and eat immediately and their Property taken away – Under such Circumstances I asked Mr B. how he came to leave his wife and Children, and so many hundreds of Pounds worth of private Property which he said he possest in such imminent danger? And could he venture to return with so much Property? I wished no more of the Society's Stores to go, than were necessary for the present but he took all with him, excepting a few trifles that are to be sold here – Such great Quantities of Stores are very strong Temptations to the Natives to rob them – I am sure they could not keep them in this Colony – They would soon be robbed of them – When to took the Stores, he told me he would return to [f] England with Gen^l Mac. In the Surry as G.M. had promised him to call [at] the Bay of Islands – I think in this he will be disappointed – When I handed over the original Invoice to the Rev^d T. Kendall, of the different Articles of Clothing &c &c that had been sent out by the Society, and which were to be charged to the Settlers and Labourers in Part Payment of their Salaries I desired him to add the

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Shipping Expenses, as stated in the Account to the different Articles, in order to keep the Account correct, which was a mere trifle; this Mr Butler considered Extortion in me; and said a great deal about it in the Colony, as if I was making money of the Missionaries, and defrauding them— You will see it mentioned in his Letter— he went so far, that some of my friends urged me to prosecute him for defamation— I have not taken a yard of Cloth belonging to the Society to make myself a Coat, nor benefited one Half-penny by directing the Rev^d T. Kendall to put on the Goods the Shipping expenses which came to about 6-1/2 per cent, the Society will place little credit in the Statement of Mr Butler— As he Mr Butler and the workmen, were [f] charged no more than what the Society actually paid I thought he had no Ground to complain— he took twenty yards of the black Cloth for his own use, and I think 14 y[ar]ds of the Blue— He could not want all this to wear— and therefore he must have taken it for some other Purpose. As I had not taken one yard of Cloth for my own use, it was out of his Power to say I had derived any Advantage from it— I am sure if I had taken a Coat Piece, and paid for it, the Society would not have blamed me— I am satisfied I can give the Society a good Account of what comes into my Possession as Agent— I have been much hurt, I will not say at Mr Butler's unreasonable but wicked Conduct— I have ever studied the Safety and Comfort of the Missionaries, and it is very painful to be annoyed by those who stand in so near a tender a Relation, as the Missionaries do to me— My attempt to put a Stop to the Barter of Muskets and Powder has been an

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unpardonable offence— Such a Connection was formed between Mr Kings Father and Mother in Law at Port Jackson [f] and the Missionary Settlement, that the old woman was transported for receiving Muskets stolen from the 48. Regiment at Sydney— This evil will Account for many of the differences that have taken Place between me and the Missionaries— It will be stopt in time; but not easily— If you read Mr Butler's Letters, they contain the Spirit which I have often had to contend with in Mr Kendall and also in King— Mr W. Hall always conducted himself with Propriety in his Language, and manner; while others have been very abusive— All these personal matters I would very willingly overlook, if they would only attend to their Missionary duties— It is a matter of little moment to myself what they say of me, or to me; further than what tends to injure the Cause— I am satisfied if the present men will not do God's work in N. Zealand, he will find others that will— Their Labours are not in vain— Their living amongst the Natives is attended with many good Effects, and every day the way is gradually [f] opening more and more— I hope God willing to pay them another visit when opportunity offers— In the mean time there is no telling what such an headstrong man as Mr Butler is may do— When I arrived in the Dromedary he was then advising all of them to leave the island— When I was absent at the Thames under the Pretence I was killed he then talked of leaving; and he was frequently conversing upon the same Subject when I was there— that I shall not be surprised at anything he may do— With respect to this Colony, I am happy in our new Governor, Sir Tho[ma]s Brisbane— I

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can have no doubt but all will go on well with him as far as I and the Society are concerned— He will prove a real friend— He has urged me to take upon me the Office of a Magistrate again. Under all the Circumstances of the Colony I could not well refuse him, tho' I wished not to act— He has appointed several of my friends to assist, as I would not engage to take the [f] labouring over again, but to sit occasionally as Circumstances might require— His Excellency has expressed himself well satisfied with my past Conduct— I wished, if Gen[era]^l Mac[quarie] had any thing to say against me, that he would do it before he left the Colony; and wrote both to Gen[era]^l Macquarie and Sir Thomas on the Subject, and spoke to him several times, but Gen[era]^l Mac[quarie] declined any Communication on these Subjects— Sir Thomas has been very attentive to me since he came, and I hope I shall never give him cause to alter his good opinion— Great Peculations have been discovered since Gen[era]^l Mac[quarie] left the Colony— Some of my old Enemies will now be visited for their crimes— These things will be reported to the Government at Home thro' the proper Channel; and then it will be seen who have done their duty to their King and Country and who have not— The Enquiry [f] into the public Peculations have now been going on for some weeks past, and many will be involved— The mine is sprung since Gen[era]^l Mac[quarie] sailed— Many of the hidden things of Darkness will be revealed— As these reports will be made Home by the Gov[erno]^r I shall not say more on the Subject— There are general Articles to be sold belonging to the Society which neither Mess^{rs} Kendall

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nor Butler would take, as soon as they are disposed of, I will transmit the Account of the proceeds and give you Credit for the same

I remain

D^r & Rev^d Sir

Yours very affectionately

Sam^l Marsden

Rev^d J. Pratt

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