

*William Wilberforce to Josiah Pratt*

Kensington Gore

March 4, 1814

My Dear Sir,

It appears from the account I have received from M<sup>r</sup> Hardcastle that the Vessel now Building by the Missionaries in the South Sea Island is by no means such as to answer the purpose, or supersede the necessity of the plan recommended by M<sup>r</sup> Marsden. If therefore our Society paused upon the execution of the scheme [f] which it had determined to adopt on the credit of an adviser so intelligent and experienced as M<sup>r</sup> Marsden in the hope, or at least expectation, that the Missionary's Vessel would be adequate to the objects in view, it may probably resume its intention and proceed to the carrying into execution of the measure recommended by M<sup>r</sup> Marsden. I am grieved, I own, to reflect that we are loosing [sic] [f] so much precious time, after M<sup>r</sup> Marsden's having so strongly encouraged us to adopt the plan several yeas ago, and when we find that subsequent experience has tended only to confirm his original persuasion— The unwillingness to comply with his advice appeared to me to arise from the plan being mistakenly supposed to be primarily of a commercial nature rather [f] than of a Missionary kind properly so-called— But if any Gentlemen who are under this impression will attentively peruse M<sup>r</sup> Marsden's various communications, they will, I am persuaded, lay aside those ideas, and admit the reasonableness of M<sup>r</sup> Marsden's measures. Let me beg you to have the goodness to inform me whenever the subject is to be under

*William Wilberforce to Josiah Pratt*

consideration, if I mean, it is to be regarded [f] as a measure on which the Board has not made up its mind on the principle; which I must confess I understood to be the case, that I may have an opportunity of attending. It would give me however far more pleasure to hear that the Committee appointed to carry the scheme into execution was proceeding with its work. —

I am always  
with esteem & regard

My Dear Sir  
your faithful Serv<sup>t</sup>

W. Wilberforce

Rev<sup>d</sup> J. Pratt [f]

P.S. I trust you will excuse my dictating as I have far more writing than agrees with my eyes —