

Samuel Marsden to Josiah Pratt

Parramatta Decr 20th.

1823 –

Private

Revd & Dr. Sir/

Placed in a confidential Situation as I am by the Committee of the C.M.S. I think it but just to communicate my views to you in a confidential manner, of the missionaries individually, which will enable you to account for many of the evils which have existed in the Mission – I need not say much of the Rev.d T. Kendall – his whoredoms & drunkenness have been too notorious. His natural temper is proud perverse and obstinate – He never could be governed, tho' he possesst [?] some qualifications for a missionary and I always hoped he would be reclaimed, until his Return from England, and then I gave him up as a lost man – Mrs Kendalls Misconduct ^placed her in the lowest State of degradation, in the opinion even of the poor Heathens – They expected Mr. Kendall would have put her to death for her Adultery; and I know one Chief who interceded with Mr. Kendall to save her life, under the Conviction that she would die – when Mr. Kendall arrived in New Zealand from Europe, and took the Chiefs daughter to live with him as his wife, from Pride, and Lust, and Guilt & Rage he became a terror to his Colleagues, and kept them in constant fear, and alarm, while he was squandering away the Property of the Society to ensure his Influence, and Authority with the natives – [f] Mr. Wm. Hall told me that Mr. Kendall wanted the natives to destroy his Premises, but they refused to do this. After Mr. Kendall was suspended, Mr.

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Butler was requested to preach occasionally at Ranghehoo, but from the threats of Mr. Kendall, he was often afraid to go – on one occasion when Mr. Butler went to administer the Sacrament at the time Mr Kendall was living in open adultery, Mr. Kendall went to the Sacrament, and Mr. Butler durst not refuse to administer it to him – when he had received the Sacrament Mr Kendall told the natives, what offence Mr Butler had committed in administering the Sacrament to him, and that he ought to be deprived of his Gown. This was done to lower Mr B. in the opinion of the natives – I am surprised at the good sense which the natives have shewn in not intervening with the Quarrels of the missionaries; and that Mr. Kendall has not been able with all the Influence and means he has possest to excite the natives to any act of violence against his Colleagues. The family of the Chief, whose daughter Mr. Kendall took, and whom he supported with every thing, have been a little troublesome, because they cannot now obtain what they wish from the Societies Stores; as they are not in Mr Kendall's Possession; yet they have committed no Act of Violence. The Chief and his family complained to me [f] of Missrs. Hall & King; and said they had behaved very ill to Mr. Kendall, who was their best friend. What hurt the Chief was, he could not now have his wants supplied as formerly when his daughter had the keys [?] of the Stores in Mr Kendalls House. Mr Kendall & his wife are awfully fallen Mr. Wm. Hall is an excellent mechanic, and a very indus=trious man: but he wants that pious feeling, that tender Compassion for the Heathen which constitutes the very Essence of a missionary's Character – He has taught many of the natives to saw, but has never taught one of them to

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sharpen a Saw – I have often been very much hurt at this, and have said much to him upon the Subject – until a native is taught how to keep his Saw in order, he can never be of much benefit to himself or others. This neglect is a great disgrace to Mr. Hall – His Reasons for doing so, I never could learn – neither has he taught any of them to make even a mor [?], or a wheelbarrow. The natives have sawed the principal part of the timber that has been used in the Buildings, but [?] have not been instructed in any thing more – Mr Hall has been injured by his Intercourse with the Shipping in trafficking with the Ships one way or another – He was tempted to this by the Example of Mr. Kendall, and his strong love [f] of this present world. The love of money appears to have been, and still is, his besetting Sin. I fear he will not conquer this disposition, which has hitherto prevented his usefulness and will continue to do so, as long as he is under the dominion of this dangerous thirst. He is hospitable industrious and moral, and has conducted himself with Prudence before the Heathen, but he wants active Piety, fervent Zeal, and tender Compassion for the Souls of the Heathen to quantify him as an useful missionary. Mrs Hall is very much like her Husband in the above respects – Mr Hall is also a man of strong mental Powers, possesses a clear understanding; but is obstinate, and too confident of his own opinions – He will follow his own Judgement, in opposition to all that can be said to him. Mr. King is a man of little Knowledge, and very feeble Abilities. I believe he is pious; but he has always been very difficult to manage. Ignorance Pride & obstinacy are often united in the same Character; and they are strongly exemplified in Mr. King.

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Tho' it would be an honor, and Credit to him, to make a Pair of Shoes for a missionary, his wife or Child, when distressed for a Pair, yet his Pride would not allow him to do this. He would think this would degrade him - I have had many Conversations with him upon this Subject, sometimes I have endeavoured to persuade [f] persuade him to do this, and sometimes have censured him - but all would not do - because he foolishly imagined this would degrade him. He has done very little, but attended to his own family since he has been in New Zealand - He spins no twine, nor attends to the Plan in any other way. I have wished him to have taught a native youth to make Shoes but he has refused - He is now teaching a few Children, but I fear he will not persevere. He married a women of little Knowledge; who had been brought up in a very low way - His wifes mother was a very infamous drunken worthless woman - I never remember to have seen Mrs. King at Church before she was married - This unfortunate marriage may have hurt Mr. King - He may not be able to do, what he otherwise would do. However, whatever may be the Cause, whether his wife, or his own Pride, the mission has been little promoted by his Exertions [?] - Should we (I would ask) expect much to be done at Rangheehoo by Missrs. Kendall Hall & King, and their wives under the above Circumstances. I believe the Contact of Civilization with the Heathens has been the great Cause of their Improvement - and I think under all the misconduct of the mission [f] =ries the natives have behaved well. I admit the missionaries have had their trials; they have had their fears and Alarms - but their distresses and Anxieties have principally originated from

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their own hearts Lusts or Passions; and not from the natives. Mr. Cowell and his wife have also lived at Rangheehoo – He is one of the most idle men I have ever known – He has done nothing during his Residence there that I could learn, either from himself or others: and seldom met his Colleagues on the Sabbath day. He lived in Mr. Kendall's House when he cohabited with the native woman; and appears to have advocated Mr. Kendalls Cause – Mrs. Cowell was quite a young Girl when he married her, about 16 years old – he never mentioned to me that he intended to marry until after he was married – She was not calculated for a missionaries wife, from her want of Experience, and her youth – He father and mother were both Convicts, and very immoral in their lives, so that she [f] could have no advantages from Education – Mr. Cowell was very intimate with Captain Irvine, when the corresponding Committee existed, that he paid little attention to what I said to him at that time – from his Conduct in N.S.Wales I considered him an idle man, and totally unfit for missionary work, tho' I did not feel myself authorised to prevent his going to the Place of his original destination, as he had his friends in the Colony, who would have been ready to have condemned my Conduct had I done so – I gave my Sentiments freely to my Colleagues the Revd. Hill & Cartwright before Mr. Cowell embarked, and told them he would never do any Good – Mr Hill had been very kind to him, and he proved very ungrateful, and seldom went to Church on the Sabbath, so that he has proved a drone in the mission. With respect to the Revd. J. Butler, he was always a man of violent overbearing temper. He Could not bear the least Controul – made his

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Colleagues very unhappy by his unkind Conduct to them. I believe he was the principal Cause [f] of Mr Francis Hall leaving New Zealand. His Conduct to the natives was rude, and unchristian-like, I have often wondered that they have not taken advantage of his Anger, and Passion, and committed some Act of Violence upon him. His Son and he used to be continually quarrelling; to the great disgrace of the Christian name. When I went down to New Zealand with Mr. Butler and his Colleagues at the first, the father and Son had such violent differences, that I did not think it safe to leave young Mr. Butler there, and brought him back with me to N.S.Wales. In about 18. months he returned to his father, when their differences began again. The young man visited N.S.Wales a second time – got married to a very young girl, and returned to his father with his wife. They all soon quarrelled again, and when I arrived, Mr. Butler was employed in prepar=ing materials for a large expensive House for his Son on the opposite side of the River – There was no School, nor likely to be any. This was very distressing to my mind – Mr. Butler had got a very capacious [f] Capacious House, sufficient to accommodate both himself and Son – I enpressed my astonish=ment that he should totally neglect the Schools, and provide such Buildings for him=self and Son, and told Mr. Butler I did not know how he would account for his Conduct to the Society. Young Mr. B. and his wife have neither of them any religious feeling, and totally unfit for the work of the mission – Mrs. Butler Senior is a very laborious woman, but ignorant, and came out against her will, that much could not be expected from her as a missionary's wife. In the midst of all these unpleasant Circumstances I

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was greatly at a loss what to do: or where to begin to remedy these evils - I saw there was no Remedy but their Removal: and how to accomplish this I did not know. I considered Mr. Butler more dangerous to the mission, from his violent temper, and neglect of the Schools than Mr. Kendall; because he possest Authority and governed the other missionaries, while Mr. Kendall had no Power. It was in vain to look for any Reformation in hand for his Habits were fixed [?] ----- [f] The loss of the Brampton gave me more time to weigh all these Subjects; and I finally resol=ved to take Mr. Butler with me & his Son should Mr. Kendall refuse to go - tho' I said nothing to Mr. B. on the subject until the time came -

Mr. & Mrs. Kemp are devoted to the work - food and raiment is all they require. They are much esteemed by the natives. They have suffered much uneasiness from Mr. Butler's unkind behaviour towards them. Mr. Kemp could not do what he wished. He would have had a School if it had been in his Power; but this he could not accomplish without the Sanction and aid of Mr. B. which could not be obtained - They will now be relieved from all Restraint - and I have no doubt will go on well - - -

Mr. Shepherd is also a valuable missionary; has great Abilities for acquiring the native language. He can now preach in the native tongue, and travels thru the different tribes for 20 miles or more to the westward. Mr. Kemp and Shepherd are very much united. [f] They are careful of the Society's Property, and moder=ate on all their Expectations. What I have seen of the Revd. Mr. Williams ^Mrs. W and of Mr. & Mrs. Clarke I feel confident they will give

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Satisfaction to the Society, and proven Blessing to the mission. I think from all that I have stated in my Journal, public Letters and documents, together with this Confidential Letter you will be able to form some clear Judgement of the State of New Zealand, and the mission - I have communicated all matters of Importance that I know and perhaps you may think I have said too much. The Committee may also not approve of all that I have done - My Situation has been trying and difficult - I can say with truth, that if I have erred, I have not erred intentionally - my wish has been to approve myself to the Head of the Church, unto whom I must finally be accountable. I am persuaded that God will form his divine Blessings upon the Inhabitants of New Zealand, thro' what=ever Channel his wisdom may judge best to convey them. It is neither the good ^Conduct of the missionaries, unaided by the Energy of his divine Spirit, that can break the settlers of [f] Superstition in which the natives are bound, nor is it their misconduct that can defeat the gracious purposes of Heaven towards these poor Heathens. The work is going on and will go on. Tho' I must condemn the misconduct of some of the missionaries yet they have all done good in one way or another, and their very Crimes will be overruled for the border=ance [?] of the Gospel. The natives will see that the Conduct of the Adulterer, the Violent man, the idle, the drunkard will not Pass unpunished by the Society. I fully explained to the natives that every mission=ary who behaved ill should be removed to Port Jackson; which will have a good Effect upon their minds - I must now conclude this Long Letter, which will tire your Patience to read - As it is merely a Private Letter I have

MS. 498/251

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written it in haste, and must beg your Indulgence for any errors you may meet
with in it -

I remain

Dr. & Revd. Sir

Yours Affectionately

Revd. J. Pratt

Samuel Marsden