

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SYDNEY GAZETTE,

SIR,

The Editor of the Australian Quarterly Journal, in his review of the Specimens of a Dialect of the Aborigines of New South Wales, Art. 2, has alluded to the circumstances of the mission, in terms which render it necessary to explain. The London Missionary Society is perfectly ignorant of my unpleasant situation. The Directors, as a body, are uninformed of it as yet; and the Committee, who have taken upon themselves to act in the manner which has plunged me into the most perplexing difficulties, may, have possibly been misled by false representations from this Colony.

I am not conscious of committing any unintentional error, or I would avow it, and any gentleman may see my accounts and instructions, to satisfy themselves on this subject. I have drawn up a statement for the Directors of the London Missionary Society, to be sent to each individual, demanding investigation; the result of which I must await, before any new arrangements as to my future employment in this Colony, or the South Sea Islands, can take place.

The Committee returned me a bill of £400, directing me to sell the mission property and take it up; but, to provide for my personal safety, in the case of the property when sold, not covering the amount, they request the Rev. Mr. Marsden to sign with me fresh bills, which bills so signed they resolve to honor, and have written to us both to that effect. The house and improvements of land could not be sold without an arrangement with Government, as the ground is to be in trust for the natives. Such articles as were disposable have been turned into cash, and paid into the hands of my agent. But Mr. Marsden does not feel himself authorised to join with me in signing fresh bills to pay those returned; the consequence is, a law process against me to compel the Committee at home to send out the money. The Committee prohibits my drawing for any more than £250 per year for the support of myself, wife, and family of six children, and for objects strictly Missionary; and if the Government does not meet all other expenses beyond that sum for the Aborigines, I am desired to abandon the Mission, and return to the South Sea Islands.

I had ascertained that Mr. Marsden would not sign with me fresh bills before I left Lake Macquarie. I had information that Government could not assist.— I had notice of the returned bills from the treasurer(s); and I found by experience, that the next year's expense would be nearly £500. Therefore, I do not conceive myself at all hasty in quitting the scene of labours, surrounded as I was with such overwhelming difficulties, and taking up my abode in Sydney, where my presence is required for many reasons, and wait until the Directors and Society are acquainted in England with my circumstances, and apply a remedy.

There are a few persons here who have intimated that they would subscribe annually for the benefit of the Aborigines, rather than the Mission should be totally abandoned. But I fear that the Editor has, unintentionally, by his allusions to dissent, prejudiced the case, which it is evident he wishes to support. To prevent which, I will frankly avow my object, namely, to teach from the Scriptures alone Christianity, independent on any human system, or human form of Church Government, leaving those who may embrace the Gospel, to attach themselves to any Christian church, as may be most consistent to their own views and consciences, guided by the word of God. Such also is the fundamental principle of our Society; which consist of Christians of all denominations.

I take this opportunity of contradicting the report that I have refused pecuniary aid from Government; to say the least, it is a gross misrepresentation.

Any suggestions tending to the benefit of the Aborigines will meet with prompt attention, if addressed to my residence, No. 20, Upper Pitt-street, Sydney.

L. E. THOMAS

Jan 14, 1828.

HICKMAN