

INSTRUCTIONS TO EARLY MISSIONARIES

INSTRUCTIONS of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society to Mr. Leigh, and to Mr. Morgan, the former going out to establish Missions in New Zealand and the Friendly Islands; the other to the River Gambia in West Africa, read to them at a Public Ordination Service in the New Chapel, City Road, January 17th, 1821.

Various directions as to a number of particular circumstances and arrangements, which arise out of your respective undertakings will be furnished to you, by the Committee before your departure but on the great object of your Mission, and the general principles by which your conduct is to be regulated, the Committee affectionately lay before you the following advice and instructions.

You are both appointed to the important work of undertaking new Missions. You are going among the heathen, and to those stations in the heathen world where Christ is not named. You are appointed not to enter upon other men's labours, but to lay the foundation: not to reap the fruits of others' toils, but for the first time to clear away the encumbrances of the ground, and to put the plough into an unbroken soil. Such an undertaking, we need, scarcely remind you, demands your most solemn consideration. It is one which from its difficulties and hazards requires you in an especial, manner, to gird up the loins of your mind, to summon all your courage and to put your trust in God.

You are both going not only beyond the bounds, of the church of Christ the ordinances and privileges of which you must for a time be deprived of, but also beyond the bounds of the British Empire; and will not, like most of your fellow Missionaries, enjoy the protection of its power, and its laws. You, Brother Leigh, will fix your residence among the rude savages of New Zealand, and you, Brother Morgan, are appointed to penetrate the dense negro population of the Gambia, where power only is law, and where there are few restraints on the violence of men. In this respect you are placed in circumstances similar to many of the first preachers of the gospel. You carry in, an emphatic sense, your lives in your hand: But, if you have as we trust, sufficient reason to believe that God hath sent you on this work, to his unfailling promises you may look with unshaken confidence. Much of the New Testament was written by Missionaries, and for their use, and it comprehends all those cases which are continually arising in the labour of evangelising the world. If you read it with reference to the great work in which you are engaged, Its meaning will be placed under stronger and more impressive lights than it can assume to any not thus actually employed; and no part of it will come home to your hearts with so much application and comfort, as its special promises to those who, for His name's sake, go forth among the Gentiles to testify the Gospel of the grace of God. It was to the primitive.

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Missionaries that Jesus, their Master, said "The very hairs of your head are all numbered."

Among some of the tribes of New Zealand, and of Africa, you will be the first Christian residents. Of Christians by profession, they have heard, some of them have been their visitants; and unhappily from the conduct of many, they must have imbibed notions of our religion not in the least tending to recommend it. But they have also heard of Christian Missionaries, and have learnt to distinguish between them and others. Let this circumstance impress you. You have a high character to sustain; and closely as every word and action will be scrutinised by the people to whom you will each be sent, remember that it is from your daily spirit and walk that they will term their estimate both of your motives, and the religion you would enjoin upon them. He who would recommend a new religion to others as the only true religion coming from the only living and true God, is especially called upon to show that it is of God, by the effects produced upon himself. In the habitual kindness of your tempers therefore, in your holy and even scrupulous demeanour; in the openness and rectitude of all your intercourse with others; in the impressive love you shall manifest to your fellow-labourers, who may go out with you, or may follow after you; and in the orderly and religious management of your families, earnestly pray and strive, that you may be the living example of the superior purity and excellence of the religion of our Lord. Jesus.

It is an important circumstance that in New Zealand, and the Committee have reason to believe also among the negroes up the Gambia the heathen are ready to place their children under the care of Christian Missionaries. In the humble but important task of superintending, teaching and catechising in Schools, your earlier efforts will therefore be demanded; and even when assistants are raised up a careful and affectionate oversight of them will be necessary. To this part of your work you are therefore required to pay great attention. It is the first instrument for undermining the prejudice and superstitions of the heathen put into your hand. A number of immortal souls will thus be brought under your influence, and early imbued with right principles. Consider them as the charge of Christ committed to you; hear Him. Among these most useful, though not splendid engagements, saying unto you, "Feed my lambs," "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," by any neglect or indifference of yours, for of such will be the kingdom of God in the countries into which you are going. Let all your plans of education, however be strictly Christian, and let the conversion of youth confided to you be the object of your most solicitous regard.

You are nevertheless preachers of the gospel, and are to watch every opportunity to gain access to the minds of the adults. For this purpose your study of the native languages must be assiduous and conscientious. You are to consider this as a sacred and religious duty, rather than as a matter of literature and in this study you are to seek for Divine help in all your endeavours. It is thus "by prayers and pains," as the

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Apostles of the American Indians used to say, that the difficulties of the most barbarous tongues have been subdued by Missionaries, and in strange, and uncouth languages have even savage tribes been taught the wondrous works of God.

In giving instruction to the natives, it is of importance, that you rather propose and enforce with meekness the glorious truths of the gospel, than dispute with their superstitions, and absurd opinions. No true Christians have anywhere been made by mere disputations, however well conducted. You are to propose the gospel in its simplest and most explicit truths, as an undoubted revelation from God, to dwell upon the wretched and guilty state of man, and upon, the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and invite and persuade them to be reconciled to God. Do all of this, not with the air and spirit of a dogmatist, but with the sympathy and kind solicitude of him who came "to seek and save that which was lost." Nor let it be ever absent from your minds, that all your hopes of success depend upon the Divine influence and power accompanying truths thus spoken in the benevolent spirit and according to the true doctrine or the gospel. Let every word of advice, and every public discourse, be given and delivered in the spirit of prayer, and steadfastly fix your hopes in God.

As you will be appointed to assist the natives in acquiring the knowledge of agriculture, and some of the useful arts of life, habits of labour and industry must be cultivated by you, at least in the early stage of your Mission. To all things by which you can promote the real good of the natives you must apply yourselves, even as the great Apostle of the Gentiles, working with your own hands. In all this beware of the secular spirit. These are works to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, and for Him. Whatsoever you are called to in this respect, "do it heartily, and do it unto the Lord."

The peculiarity of the new stations in New Zealand and Tongataboo will require that you should be furnished with a considerable quantity of hardware, implements of agriculture, etc., which you will have to barter with the natives for the food convenient for you, for timber to build your houses, chapels and schools. In these transactions you are to remember that the instructions which prohibit all our Missionaries from engaging in trade is still binding upon you. This barter is to be established merely for procuring necessary supplies for the Mission, in a place where money is unknown, and no more. It is also explicitly to be understood that no Missionary employed in stations so circumstanced as New Zealand, and other of the South Sea Islands, is to acquire any property. His wants will be supplied by the Committee, by the regular transmission of those articles by which necessaries may be obtained in those places; and the buildings, land and everything else which may be procured for the use of the Mission, shall remain the property of the Missionary Society alone, to be used by the Missionaries who may in succession be appointed to those stations.

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Should you acquire influence and consideration with the natives of the place of your destination, as we trust by the blessing of God you will, you may be placed in circumstances, of some difficulty arising from the quarrels and different views of the various chiefs. Your plain line of duty is to take no part in their civil affairs, and to make it understood, that interference in these matters is no part of your object, and that you are sent to do good to all men. This however will not prevent you giving them such advice as may be beneficial to all parties when it is desired, and more especially you ought earnestly to endeavour to induce them to abandon those cruel practices which are so frequent in their wars. Kind and prudent remonstrances against cruelty of every description, may be the means of softening the barbarism of their manners, even before they are efficiently brought under the influence of the Gospel.

The rules In the General Instruction, as to the administration of Baptism, and discipline in general, are specially recommended for your guidance. Our aim is not merely to civilise but to convert and in every instance careful instruction in the Christian Faith and evidence of a true turning of the heart unto the Lord, is to be required before that sacred ordinance is administered.

As in New Zealand especially, and ultimately on the banks of the Gambia, the Brethren with their Families must live together in the Mission-house, the careful cultivation of the kindest brotherly affection is solemnly enjoined. To promote and establish this, let the rules for your conduct towards each other in the General Instructions, be sacredly adhered to. Let the heathen around you behold and say, "See how these Christians love." In honour prefer one another. Remember your great work, your brief and uncertain life; your solemn account. Live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS TO MR. LEIGH

As you are appointed to superintend the Missions to New Zealand and Tongataboo, we recommend to your great kindness and mildness of manner to your Brethren as well as great prudence and economy in the management of the whole of your affairs. There must be no inequality among you; you must submit to privations in common, and all your comforts must be equally shared.

It is recommended, that you purchase by barter not more than 500 acres of land, at a fair remuneration to the natives, for the use of the Mission at New Zealand, and if it be thought expedient, not more than the same quantity at Tongataboo!

That you as soon as possible, and in the most economical manner, erect at the place of your location in New Zealand, suitable premises for a school, a room for public worship and three suites of apartments one for the residence of each family, all under the same roof, that there be a common room, in which the meals of the whole Mission-family may be taken together, and family worship regularly performed. The

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same to be done at Tongataboo. Each family to have for its separate use one sitting-room and one sleeping room for the present.

That all articles furnished from time to time, for barter, for, the use of the Mission, shall, both at New Zealand and Tongataboo, be considered as common stock, in no case to be appropriated to his convenience and use by any individual Missionary, either for building, purchase of land, provisions, or other expenditure.

That one of the Brethren shall be appointed Secretary to each Mission whose business it shall be to enter into a book, to be provided for that purpose, all the articles sent out for barter, from time to time, by the Committee, and those first taken by the Brethren, and that no articles shall be taken out of the common stock, to be bartered or otherwise made use of, but by the consent of at least two or the Brethren, whilst the number shall be three in each station; or when the number shall be increased, of two-thirds of the whole, and not without an entry being made at the time of the number and kind of articles so taken out of the stock, and the purposes for which they are to be bartered; which entry is to be signed in the hand-writing of the Missionaries as in the first instance, and two-thirds, when the number shall be increased. The Secretary shall be required to make copies, half-yearly, of the book-account of all stores received, expended, and on hand, with the various purposes to which the expenditures have been applied, and to transmit them to the Committee, made up half-yearly, to June 30th, and Dec. 31st, of each year, in duplicate by the first vessels. These duplicates, as well as the originals are to be signed by all the Brethren on each station. At Tongataboo, as long as there shall be but two Brethren employed on the Mission, the stores to be applied only by the joint consent of both.

The Secretary to each Mission shall, with his half-yearly accounts also inform the Committee what articles are most in request among the natives for barter; and also state the rise or fall in the value of the various articles, as the case may be.

That for the purchase of articles of food, for the Mission-family, each of the Brethren shall in rotation, week by week, be appointed to barter with the natives, one only at the same time being empowered to transact the business; and that each of the wives also, in weekly rotation, take the charge of cooking the provisions and preparing the meals for the common table. The rotation to be so regulated, that wife and brother who purchase the articles of food shall superintend their preparation for the same week.

That a fowling-piece be furnished to each Missionary, but that no barter shall be allowed in muskets, or warlike weapons of any kind.

The Missionaries at New Zealand and Tongataboo will be expected to establish schools for the children of the natives, and as soon as practicable, bring the natives to contribute to the support of schools, to the value in goods, of £50 per annum. And the Brethren and their wives are directed to adopt such methods of instruction as they

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may, on mutual consultation, judge most suitable, and that they themselves act as teachers.

That on each of these Missions £50 per annum shall be allowed to each married Missionary, and £12 per annum for each child as quarterage, and that the Society send out, from time to time, as many suits of clothes as each Missionary may order, to be charged to his account, and any surplus of cash, due to him as the balance of the above named allowance, be paid to him either in goods or cash, as he may direct.

That as each Mission-family will need, from year to year, a supply of salt, butter, tea, coffee, sugar, soap and a few similar articles, from New South Wales, a sum not exceeding £40 shall be allowed for this purpose, to be drawn by the Superintendent of the New South Wales Mission.

That the Settlement at New Zealand shall be named after Mr. Wesley and that at Tongataboo after Dr. Coke, the compound name to be determined by the site of the location.

That the Brethren shall endeavour to introduce the knowledge of agriculture and such useful arts as they know among the natives; and that they shall bring as much of the land, which they may purchase for the use of the Mission, gradually into cultivation as may ultimately supply them with the necessaries of life.

That £100 shall be allowed for the purchase of cattle and other articles of immediate subsistence to be taken from Botany Bay, if that sum be necessary; but it is to be hoped that the cattle and other articles may be obtained by the favour of friends in New South Wales, at least in part.

That £80 be allowed for furniture, as per list, for the Mission-house in New Zealand.

(Signed) (Secretaries)

Note—Copy in the Alexander Turnbull Library is not signed.

The Pitt Street Church copy of the same document is signed by John Burdsall, Jos. Taylor and Richard Watson.

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