

Ross Ville

Jan 10<sup>th</sup> 1850

My Dear Sir

I am truly grateful for your kind sympathizing letter of the 12<sup>th</sup> ultimo & have much pleasure in stating that at present we are enjoying great peace & the members of the Society are exceedingly attentive to their christian duties and are trying to help forward the ark of the Lord by their contributions. So much so that their efforts with the economical plans I have in contemplation will lessen the expenses one half.

Your work & mine is up hill & by it we may incur the dislike of the selfish who follow the Lord for the loaves & fishes but depend upon it we are doing the Natives more real good than by the opposite course which our predecessors pursued.

Giving to Indians (except in extreme cases) – destroys them – but teaching them to give is the making of them. You may form some idea of what we are doing when 83 have come forward since the year commenced & given in their names promising to work for the mission some – 20 days – 12 – 10 – 5 – 3 – & 2. — &c &c. Some have given cash – others promises to give provisions in the shape of deer meat, rabbits, geese, ducks, some have promised to make nets – others to cut wood – haul wood & boards. The subscription list just now amounts to £24..0..0. independent of their having given candles for the Church & wood for the School.

I have explained to them the manner in which the money is raised in order to send the Gospel to the Heathen, their obligations, duty and the necessity of assisting as far as they are able and especially now as the Society has a debt of £13,000.

I forward you 2 Catechisms, 2 Hymn Books, & 12 of your Vocabulary which I have on hand. We are very much in want of about 2 dozen of Common Prayer Books can you supply us – do if you can I shall be happy in paying whatever may be the charge. I have (since last Fall) made an alteration in

the mode of conducting our Sabbath Services – in the place of a Prayer meeting in the Morning — I hold a regular full service at the village – Reading the Church Prayer & a sermon afterwards. I go to the Fort and Preach at 11 1/2 o'clock — at 3 P.M. full service again at the village, & at 6 1/2 o'clock PM an exposition of some part of Holy Scripture. So you see every Sabbath is a hard days work for me, but

'Labour is rest, and pain is sweet

If thou my God art here.'

Many read and understand English & would respond if we had Prayer Books, not to give them, that is out of the question, but to sell them at a very low price. — Perhaps you might send 1/2 Dozen by the next Express do if you can.

Mrs Mason writes in presenting our best wishes for your present & eternal welfare & may the blessing of Almighty God continue to crown your self denying labours with abundant success – so prays –

Yours

Very Sincerely

W. Mason

To

The Rev<sup>d</sup> John Smithurst

Indian Settlement

P.S. Are you proceeding with your Vocabulary? We have a new & enlarged Edition of the Prayer Book with the Liturgy & Collects ready for the press, but we are out of paper. We are now going on with the New Testament & hope to have the Gospel of S<sup>t</sup> John revised & corrected & ready for the press by Spring. I often think if the Indians had the Word of God to read & study they would not be so hard to manage, & they require it now; we have

awakened their minds & we must provide them with subjects of contemplation. If we do not, Satan & the world will.

If all the Missionaries would agree to translate certain portions of God's Word, form a committee under the management and direction of his Lordship the Bishop, this desirable object would be soon attained. Their veneration of the Word of God is unquestionable. They bow to its authority, & if they possessed in their hands this invaluable blessing their love 4 God would increase in their hearts.

We have an imperfect & rough translation which needs to be retranslated of Genesis – Matthew – Mark — Luke – John, the Acts, & part of Romans. We wish to do all we can, but we are conscious that after our best efforts have been exerted the work will be very imperfect.

May the Lord bless us & enable us in all things to seek & promote His Glory alone.

W.M.

{Cover envelope:}

With a parcel

To: The Rev<sup>d</sup> John Smithurst

Indian Settlement

Red River

[pencil annotations: "Promise to send 6 P[raayer] B[ooks] in [?] ...answered Feb 1<sup>st</sup>]