

[To Harriet Jeannerett. Flinders Island.

Hobart Town 16/9 Mo 1842

My esteemed friend.

My business on the present occasion more properly relates to thy Husband, in connection with his new & interesting trust, as Superintendent of the Estab<sup>t</sup> at Flinders. Yet I am glad of the opportunity it affords of assuring thee, by the way, as well on my Wifes behalf as my own, that thou art not forgotten by us, but that we continue to feel interested in thy welfare, & that of those most intimately connected with & dear to thee: [and that we can sympathize with thee under thy new circumstances of more complete seclusion from general society, & possibly additional privations & trials, of a minor kind at least,

almost necessarily attendant on your present vocation & residence. I am glad, I repeat, to assure thee, that any little matters of a financial nature in which thy respected Partner & myself may seem to have been, shall I say - at issue? have not for a moment been suffered to interrupt the feeling of Christian regard & esteem which you respectively claim at our hands. The matters alluded to were mere concerns of business, which under my circumstances were incumbent on me to attend to, responsible as I am to others for returns within a limited period on the property with which they have entrusted me.

I will now briefly advert to the subject which forms the more immediate occasion of my writing. [There is a vessel in the harbour, with a number of Aborigines on board, destined for Flinders's Island. They have been for some time resident at Port Phillip; & I find that they have imbibed, from what sources I know not, impressions unfavourable as regards the present system of treatment of the Natives on Flinders. It may be wholly without just cause: but if their minds have become in any way prejudiced, it is better that you, & especially that the Doctor, should be aware of it, so as to avoid in every allowable way, administering food to such prejudice, which he might unwittingly do, even in matters indifferent in themselves but for this circumstance, - that a wrong construction might be put upon them where prejudice or misconception exists. The Aborigines have received the impression, that the present mode of treatment on Flinders Island is rigid & severe, & that, especially in regard to allowance of food, &c. a considerable abridgement has

taken

place. The effect of such impressions is, I fear, much the same as though they were well-founded. A feeling of aversion to residing again on Flinders I<sup>d</sup> has been induced, which it will require all the discretion you can command, & all the kindness you can exert, to dispel.

I need hardly remind the Doctor of the absolute necessity that exists, in all dealings with the Aborigines, of winning their confidence & good-will by kindness.

Not a blind indiscriminate acquiescence in all that they may ask or desire, but such a course of behaviour as true Christian principles will ever dictate, & that shall effectually convince these Children of Nature, who are actuated by the common feelings of humanity, rude as they are, - that those who have the superintendance of them & their concerns have their best interests really at heart. Convince them, in short, by the eloquent language of conduct, that you are their friends, and you may mould them to every right purpose you desire, though it may still be requisite to bear with them occasionally, & deal with them, as <sup>with</sup> uninformed & <sup>un-</sup>disciplined children.

We shall be glad to hear of your progress & prospects, and of the general welfare of your own more immediate family, as well as of your Coloured Children (for as such or with kinder feelings I hope you regard them;) and with kind remembrances, in which my S. unites, to the Doctor and thyself, and the Children;

Believe me to remain,

Thy sincere friend

Geo. W. Walker.