

N^o 2.

COPY of a Letter from Mr. Mears to Captain Colnett; dated
17th April 1789.

In Mr. Mears's Memorial of 30th April 1790. (N^o 1.)

Macoa, 17th April 1789.

Sir,

SO soon as the Argonaut is ready for Sea, you will proceed on your Voyage, and put into Execution the several Plans we have laid down, and with which you are so thoroughly acquainted; you are also so perfectly informed of the Basis they are founded on, that any Recapitulation here would be needless. We place the strongest Reliance on your Perseverance, Temper, and Prudence, and are convinced that our Hopes can only be matured but through an Exertion of those Dispositions; we strenuously recommend a moderate Use of the Powers you are invested with, not only in your Transactions with Ships of Foreign Nations, who must be treated with that good Faith and Generosity which is the Characteristic of the English Nation, and which must turn ultimately to the Honour and Credit of your Employers, but to all Ships of our own Nation, to whom we desire you to be particularly attentive in case of Distress, or any other calamitous Situation they may be thrown into; we impress on your Mind this Point, not only for the Honour and Credit resulting to us from such a liberal Line of Conduct, but from the absolute Necessity of avoiding all Subject of Dispute with Foreign Powers; we hope that no Motive whatever will induce you to deviate from this Point, as we assure you, that a Commerce that is not carried on with Honour and Respectability, as well as Humanity, would be entirely repugnant to our Feelings as Men, and Characters as British Merchants, a Character which appears to us in so respectable a Light, that no Emolument, no Advantage whatever would persuade us to countenance the smallest Deviation from it in the Person and Acts of those we employ.

Reports having been spread of great Acts of Cruelty and Inhumanity being committed by the Crews of various Vessels on the Coast of America, in their Commerce with the Natives, we now embrace the earliest Opportunity of expressing our utter Abhorrence of such hostile Acts: We sincerely hope that no Person or Persons in our Employ will have Cause to be reproached of any Thing in this Kind; Acts which we never will countenance or protect; on the contrary we shall use every Means in our Power to have the Perpetrators punished; we therefore most particularly order, that in the Course of your Command, if any Person or Persons whatever in our Employ shall commit any Murder on the Natives of America, or on others, that you seize the Offenders, and put them in Irons, and send them to the Agents in China, in order that they may be brought to condign Punishment; we are here necessitated to dwell on this Subject, from the strong Reports of such atrocious Acts being committed, which are at once not only destructive of the Commerce, but of every Sentiment of Humanity; we recommend a steady Pursuance of a mild Conduct, as the only Means to cultivate the good Will of the Natives, and draw them within the Verges of civilized Life.

We recommend to you, if possible, to form a Treaty with the various Chiefs, particularly near Nootka. If you happily accomplish this, you at once become possessed of the Furs of a great District with Honour and Credit, and without incurring a Stigma; and, if there is a Possibility of conquering our Competitors, we beg it may be in a Mode so honourable to ourselves as Generosity and Humanity, and also a strict Attention to our Business.

On the Strength of a Treaty we form considerable Hopes, for although at the Moment it may not be productive, yet in Time it will be found the most stable Way of accomplishing our Wishes, and gaining the Confidence of the Chiefs, who are known to manage the Commerce of their Subjects; for this Purpose we have supplied you abundantly with every Article known to be had in Estimation among them; and so anxious are we to have a good Understanding, and the perfecting a Treaty, that we authorize you to take under your Protection all our Allies, and protect them from Insult from all Persons whatever. Our Sentiments on this Head you will make known to all Persons whom it may concern, in order that they may govern themselves accordingly.

You will keep a Diary of your Proceedings, in which every minute Occurrence is to be recorded; and you will forward this Account of your Proceedings, from Time to Time, by all Opportunities.