

To the Reverend
Schürmann,
the Most Reverend
in Port Lincoln,
and Pastor

Dresden, April 6, 1843

Beloved brother in the Lord!

Almost two years had passed since the date of your last letter, when we received your letter of August 22, 1842, on March 27, 1843. However, this letter was not even addressed to the Committee, but to Pastor Wermelskirch, who has long since left us and is currently living in Berlin. On this occasion, we would like to point out that you should in future address all official communications to the Committee, as the Committee remains, but individuals come and go. We also urgently request that you send us a proper report at least every quarter.

Therefore, it has caused us regret and surprise that we haven't received any news from you for so long. By now, you will have noticed from our letters sent to you on December 19, 1842. There is no reason to refrain from writing if and when you have no news or events to report; for us, it is actually important to hear that you have none. Finally, you will never lack material for communication, especially if you consider them, rightly, as an accountability that you owe not only to us, but also to your office and the community in whose name you have acted.

As for your current communications, we can't say anything other than that they have filled us with sorrow, and we hasten to share with you our view on the resolution, particularly regarding your wish and request to give up the mission in South Australia, or at least to transfer you. We have long been regretting with you the great difficulties that confront the work of the mission in this country. However, we have sufficient evidence from you (at least from earlier letters from the brothers in Adelaide) that at least with the children, the work, although very difficult, is not in vain. We also see evidence from other sources that even the elderly, if only the missionary dedicates himself entirely to them, are not unreceptive. Therefore, we can by no means give up hope, and therefore also not the mission among this people. We would only have a valid reason to give it up if either the climate or the people were murderous, as is indeed the case in some parts of the world, so that the lives of the missionaries would clearly be at stake.

However, as for the difficulties you are facing, which we fully appreciate, based on the history of missions, we have enough reason to hope that some of them will eventually be overcome through faith, love, and patience. We remind you of the very similar difficulties that Egede and, after him, the missionaries of the Brethren Community endured and overcame in Greenland (there, moreover, in the most severe struggle with the climate); in a different way, by English and German missionaries among the Indians in North America and on Tahiti. The time you have so far spent in South Australia in seemingly futile activity is just the beginning compared to the waiting and work in Greenland and Tahiti. And yet you wanted to give up already?

But you seem to be giving up hope less about the natives than about yourselves, for if you comfort us by saying that after your departure, the natives would not be abandoned, as the Wesleyans would take over the abandoned posts, we ask you: Do they understand it better? Do they have more faith, love, and patience? If this is the case, then we just ask you to take them as a model and persevere in faithful work.

But we also know that then your work in the Lord will not be in vain. However, we cannot deny what Brother Teichelmann himself admits, that you do not yet seem to have demonstrated the Spirit and power among the poor heathens in the right way. We have not yet seen the dedication among them that other missionaries have exercised under much worse circumstances. These have also been rewarded for it. However, no one is crowned unless they fight righteously. We cannot hide it from you, and we must say it with regret, that you have been greatly constrained and hindered by your excessive devotion to English views and demands.

Your own last letter bears witness to this. One always hears only about the financial resources, and you rightly say that the English do everything with coldly calculating intelligence. But here, a different perspective is needed. And as the Lord says, "Blessed are those who do not see, and yet believe," so we may also say here: "Blessed are those who do not calculate, but believe, love, hope, and endure." But whoever remains in the English perspective and takes European views and demands with them, rather than renouncing everything they have, is not suited to reap fruits on such hard ground.

On the contrary, see the messengers sent by Preacher Goßner to Australia (especially to Moroton Bay), how they live among the natives and are welcomed. It's truly heartwarming to read about the Lord's commitment to them. In case you're not familiar with this, we've sent Brother Teichelmann a few issues of Goßner's "Bee", which he should also forward to you. One thing is certain: as long as you don't go among the natives and live with them, but wait for them to come to you, you won't achieve much.

But now that we know that, if the missionaries dedicate themselves entirely to this people, without paying attention to the talk of Europeans, both old and young are receptive to the proofs of faith and love -- how could we even think of giving up on

the Australian mission, on which so much has already been spent, and to which so many friends and fellow believers are looking; how could we give it up and leave it to others! No, we rather urge you not to lose faith, as it has a great reward, and the more difficult and hopeless the circumstances seem, the more urgent and faithful you should become in prayer and action. If you only despair of yourself, then nothing is lost, but rather everything is easily gained. Perhaps God wanted it to come to this so that you, feeling your own weakness, should find strength and victory in Him, who is mighty in the weak. And what joy it will be for you when your faithful efforts are finally rewarded, and you break through for the Gospel among this deeply immersed people! Once you have sown with tears in faith and hope, you will also, we hope, reap with joy.

(To Missionary Schürmann, continuation)

It's gratifying that, as you mentioned in the message accompanying your letter, the English government has decided to provide £100 for your support; and likewise the offer from the association that met in Adelaide; but we still cannot pin our hopes on this, because that would be sowing to the flesh rather than to the spirit. Rather, we ask you in conclusion to place your trust solely in the living God and to dedicate yourself entirely to the service of the gospel, and finally, to remember us with the necessary information.

After Adelaide, we simultaneously sent various literary works, which will hopefully reach you gradually as well.

Hereby, we command you to the mercy of the Lord. Remember us often with accurate reporting, just as we remember you in love and intercession before the Lord, in whose name we greet you as your brothers.

Dresden, April 6, 1843

The Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Missionary Society.