

**Zu No. 107**

To the Committee  
of the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Society  
in Dresden.

Port Lincoln, December 11, 1844

Dear brethren!

I have little to report on my missionary activities this time, because unfortunately, the attempt to expand them and make them consistent, at least in relation to the children, has failed.

I have continued the Sunday gatherings of the indigenous people present in the city that I mentioned in my last post, although not regularly, as they sometimes fail to attend or even leave the city altogether. When my brief speech, during which I urge for deep silence, and the resulting longer and lively conversation are over, I give everyone, whether young or old, some wheat, which they cook and then consume. I cannot complain that the natives are inattentive as long as I have something new or unknown to present to them. However, as soon as I repeat something they already know for the sake of the present foreigners, they become restless and notice that they already knew it.

They are also very inclined to assume hostile motives when their sins are mentioned as quarrels, theft, unchastity, etc., as they often say I shouldn't scold them. Incidentally, I have so far found them free from prejudices and they have no objection when I tell them that the speech of their ancestors, i.e. their traditions about Yaflyalla and Pulyallanna, to whom they attribute the creation or perhaps just the shaping of the land, is completely wrong, while the Europeans' version is correct, as Jehovah himself communicated it to their ancestors, who then wrote it down. They agree with this with a "Very well", but I wouldn't say it's out of conviction. Always seizing the nearest thing in a wild manner, they sometimes draw completely wrong conclusions; for example, when I spoke of Jesus, the Son of God, and repeatedly explained to them that God is a spirit, without flesh and blood; yet I found that they attributed a wife to him, because I said he had a son.

Sometimes their questions, though childish, are simple. For instance, an old man named Kunka, who attends my lectures most regularly, asked me what kind of food they eat in heaven. I told him, none at all, because the spiritual inhabitants of heaven are never hungry, which didn't seem to satisfy him. I can already, albeit imperfectly,

simply recount the great deeds of God, but drawing conclusions from them or applying them to the indigenous people is difficult. Similarly, the legal part of Christian doctrine is less easy than the evangelical one; I can make the Ten Commandments understandable to them, but I haven't succeeded in explaining the Lord's Prayer yet.

The natives have refrained from all illegal actions for a long time, apart from some minor thefts that occur from time to time. On **November 24th**, several women stole about half a sack of potatoes from a nearby field. Since this fruit only grows very unreliably here and is therefore always expensive, the owner, who had already suffered a similar loss shortly before, was naturally very upset when he discovered it. However, Yutalta, who is still a native constable with the police, soon found out from others where the potatoes were hidden, which were then returned to the owner. Incidentally, I found it remarkable that the theft happened on a Sunday, and indeed after the natives had just come from a meeting with me, where I had particularly emphasized God's wrath against thieves. It is indeed distressing to learn how little my ideas have borne fruit in this case, all the more so because it was not a lack of opportunity that prompted the theft, as the potatoes were hidden and thus stored for later use.

On the other hand, however, it is also a confirmation of the undeniable and obvious truth that one can expect little fruit from missionary effectiveness unless one also takes into account and improves the external conditions of the indigenous people. The natural man must live naturally if the spiritual one is to thrive.

The wheat that I sowed with and for the natives has not grown well, because it was sown too early and the soil is infertile.

I heard from Brother Meyer that the governor promised him support once his schoolhouse was completed; at the same time, the newspapers reported the governor's statements in the legislative council regarding the education of the indigenous children, so I could hope to see a school established here too. So on October 4th, I set off for Adelaide to pursue this matter. At first, everything seemed very favorable. Indeed, the Protector told me that I would have received a school in Port Lincoln even if I hadn't come to Adelaide. The governor also said he wished to see a school here and asked me and the Protector to calculate the annual maintenance costs for twenty children. When the sum seemed too high to him, and I noted that we had set the highest prices, but that much could be done with 100 pounds annually, he wanted to know exactly what and how much would be provided with this amount. Finally, however, he rejected the whole matter with the following words, which I quote from the reply letter:

"His Excellency regrets that the government does not have the funds at its disposal necessary for the establishment of a school in Port Lincoln, based on a plan that His Excellency considers effective. And since such an institution, on

an insufficient and ineffective basis, would limit the resources and usefulness for the natives that the government has available here (i.e. in Adelaide), without providing corresponding benefits in Port Lincoln, His Excellency considers it unwise to establish a school there for now."

With this, all hope is temporarily cut off. By the way, the claim that the same methods should not yield the same successes in Port Lincoln as in Adelaide is based on nothing but the governor's favorite views. He makes a fetish of the two Adelaide schools and conducts experiments with them to show the world what can be done with the natives. Therefore, he spares no expense there, while he cuts costs and economizes everywhere else. I now almost regret not taking over the Walkerville School near Adelaide, but I believed I could not take such a step without your prior approval, and besides, I would have been completely dependent on the government's views, which could change soon.

I didn't plan to stay in Adelaide for long this time, but I was nevertheless obliged to stay there for a full month, because the brothers Teichelmann and Klose had gone to Encounter Bay for a meeting when I arrived, and the small cutter had already sailed off again when I returned, so I had to wait until the next time. By the way, I experienced a pleasant and blessed time both with the brothers and with P. Kavel in Hahndorf, where I spent a Sunday.

The outcome of our discussion was brief and concise, because everyone, especially regarding Appelt, had a different opinion. I must admit that I would be sorry to see this brother here, unless the conditions of the indigenous people improved, which there's no prospect of happening anytime soon.

Brother Meyer maintains his view that one would be fully occupied with the school. However, it's not yet in operation, government support may cease, and I can't rely on the settlers in Encounter Bay even less. How does this idea align with the desire for a transfer that Brother Meyer recently shared with me? I'd just like to add that if a field for constant and proper missionary activity opened up in Encounter Bay, I'd gladly exchange it for mine, but so far, this doesn't seem to be the case at all. My wish and request is that the Lord would pave the way for the employment of the forces that are already here, because it's the lack of this that often weighs heavily on my heart.

Ah, that the Lord would come from Zion and redeem this captive and fallen people!

Your brother in the Lord,

C. W. Schürmann