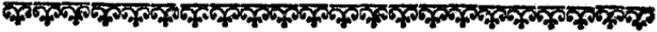


A BRIEF
A C C O U N T
OF THE
M I S S I O N
ESTABLISHED AMONG THE
ESQUIMAUX INDIANS,
ON THE
COAST OF LABRADOR.



A BRIEF
A C C O U N T
O F T H E
M I S S I O N
E S T A B L I S H E D A M O N G T H E
E S Q U I M A U X I N D I A N S ,
O N T H E
C O A S T O F L A B R A D O R ,
B Y T H E
C H U R C H O F T H E B R E T H R E N ,
O R
U N I T A S F R A T R U M ,

L O N D O N :

Printed by M. LEWIS, No. 1. Pater-noster-Row, for the
BRETHREN'S SOCIETY for the Furtherance of the
Gospel: and sold by M. LEWIS, and at all the
BRETHREN'S CHAPELS.

MDCCLXXIV.

PRICE SIX-PENCE.

A B R I E F
A C C O U N T
O F T H E
M I S S I O N , &c.

THE Esquimaux, who are the inhabitants of the coast of Labrador, from the 55th to the 60th degree Northern latitude, have been hitherto known under no other character than that of a thievish, treacherous, and murderous race of savages. But after the Brethren had made several voyages to that coast, with a view to get acquainted with this nation, and were thereby certified, that the Esquimaux had the same language with the Greenlanders, only somewhat differing in the dialect, as has been already related in the *Succinct View of the Missions established among the Heathen by the Church of the Brethren*, page 23—27 ; and it appearing that they were in all probability the same nation originally, it was resolved to establish a mission-settlement among them.

Many Brethren offered themselves to enter upon this arduous undertaking, though they were, in no wise, ignorant of the dangers attending it. Out of these, three married pairs, one widower, and seven

single Brethren were fixed upon to begin this settlement. They were,

Jens Haven, who was the first brother that went in search of the Esquimaux. He felt, even before he went to Greenland, an impulse to carry to this savage nation the gospel of their redemption, and undismayed by the many difficulties and dangers which he had met with, and might still have to encounter, he went with his wife in this company.

Christian Laersen Drachart, an old Missionary, who is frequently mentioned in *Crantz's History of Greenland*, having served the Lord twelve years among the Greenlanders, waited, as a widower, many years with earnest desire, that the door might be opened to the Esquimaux, and that he might end his days in the ministry of the Gospel among them. He accordingly failed with the rest, the third time, to Labrador.

Christopher Braasen, a physician and surgeon, who was stirred up on his visit in Greenland to devote himself to the service of the Lord among these savages, went thither with his wife.

John Schneider, born in Moravia, who had been also several years an assistant in the Mission in Greenland, but afterwards waited a considerable time in America till the door should be opened to the Esquimaux. He at length obtained his wish to go with his wife to Labrador.

Joseph

Joseph Neuffer, who had also been several years an assistant in the Mission in Greenland, and

Stephen Jenfon, who was appointed to have the care of the externals in this Mission;

And five other assistants, all Single Brethren, were chosen to enter upon this undertaking.

These came altogether from their different habitations hither, to Lindsey-house in Chelsea; and their simplicity, deliberate zeal, and devotedness of heart, was an edification to all those who conversed with them.

At the request of the Deputation of the Missions*, the Brethren's Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel among the Heathen †, undertook to fit out and establish this Mission with a zeal and heartiness which must render them truly respectable; for although it was evident to themselves, that it would be beyond the ability of their little company (with that which the Deputation, who have so many Missions to provide for, could contribute towards the expences) to raise the sums necessary for such a great undertaking; yet they trusted in the Lord, *to whom there is no restraint to execute his will by many or by few*, that he would stir up not only our brethren and sisters, but also the

* Those Brethren chosen at the synod, to have the general care of the external affairs of all the missions, are called the Deputation of the Missions.

† This society is established in London.

lovers of the kingdom of Jesus and the friends of mankind to assist them, and their hopes have not been put to shame.

As it was needful, that the Missionaries should be provided with all necessaries of every kind, therefore a house was framed here, that so it might be erected upon their arrival, and made habitable before the ship left the coast. Bricks, mortar, boards, shingles, cast iron stoves, and all necessary furniture, was procured for them, partly here, and partly in Newfoundland. And as they had but very little hopes of procuring their maintenance by hunting and fishing, therefore a quantity of suitable provisions for a year at least, and cloaths proper for that inhospitable climate, were sent with them. Though what was provided was but scanty, yet they received it with great thankfulness, and their joy in the hopes of being a blessing to the Esquimaux made them superior to all the difficulties and inconveniences.

Government shewed a kind attention to their safety, and Mr. Byron, who succeeded Sir Hugh Palliser, in the government of Newfoundland and Labrador, was so good as to issue a proclamation, forbidding every one to molest the Brethren in their settlement, or to male-treat the poor Esquimaux in any wise.

The owners, who had resolved to purchase a ship merely for the sake of this Mission, had, in the foregoing years, sustained a considerable loss, yet they determined

to purchase a larger ship for the carrying the Brethren to Labrador, they being paid by the Brethren's Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel, for the freight of the passengers and their goods.

Every thing being prepared for the voyage, they were, at a solemn meeting in the Brethren's Chapel in Fetter-lane, London, on the 5th of May, 1771, recommended, in a fervent and affecting prayer, to the gracious protection and keeping of our Father in heaven, to the grace and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the kind guidance of the Holy Ghost; and on the 8th of the same month they went on board the ship Amity, with confident and joyful hearts, and arrived, after a tedious and troublesome voyage, at St. John's in Newfoundland, on the first of July.

They met here with much kindness from some of the inhabitants; and having soon compleated their stores, sailed on the 7th for Labrador.

This last part of their voyage was still more difficult and dangerous. They were often obliged, on account of storms, to run into bays between numberless islands and sunken rocks, with which this coast abounds. They were often environed with great mountains of ice and ice-fields, which were terrible to the very mariners: but the Lord helped them out of all the dangers with which they were encompassed, and gave them the joy to see, meet and speak, at sundry times, with some of the Esquimaux. As soon as the Indians heard that
they

they were Brethren who would dwell among them, and that Jens Ingoak (little Jens, so they called Brother Haven) was there, they expressed much joy, and were very ready to serve them, by giving them directions how to find the harbour which they had chosen the foregoing year. They cast anchor in the desired haven on the 9th of August. And their first business was to return thanks and praises to the Lord, whose help they had so often experienced.

They went on shore the next day, being the 10th of August, to take a nearer view of the ground, and to fix upon the spot on which they would erect their house. One of the texts † appointed for that day in all the Brethren's Congregations was particularly impressive and encouraging. It was,

“ Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the
 “ mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O
 “ Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in
 “ the sanctuary which thine hands have established,”
 Exod. xv. 16. To which was added the collect,

“ We surely are a work of thine own hand,
 “ Thy souls, on whom thou'st deign'd thy blood to
 “ spend,
 “ By thy holy Spirit to thee directed,
 “ A cov'nant people, by free grace, elected
 “ To endless bliss.”

† There are two texts appointed for each day throughout the year, which are used in all the Brethren's Congregations; and a short collect, being generally some lines of a hymn, is subjoined.

They

They immediately set about erecting their house, inclosed it with palisades, and were so far ready, on the 22d of September, that they could enter into it and lodge in two rooms; and the worthy Captain, who had, with his crew, given them all possible assistance, could set sail for England on the 24th of September.

The place which the Brethren have chosen for their habitation upon the main land, is so situated, that both the *Nunenguak** Tribe, who dwell on the islands between them and the open sea, and the other Esquimaux, who usually go from the South to the North and back again, pass by it; and thus they have an opportunity to hear the Gospel there.

Brother Drachart began directly to preach the Gospel of reconciliation to the Savages, while the rest of the Brethren were employed in building: Their situation was critical, it was, as one of them writes, as if each *with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other held a weapon*; for it was necessary for them to use all precaution, and to be constantly upon their guard against the attempts of a nation, to whom stealing and murdering were become, through habit, a second nature. But, praised be God, who preserved them with such a powerful arm, and who turned the hearts of the Esquimaux to such friendship towards the Brethren, that there was no occasion to make use of any kind of weapons against them. The Brethren soon discovered a very considerable difference between the conduct of these savages now, and when they first saw them. For-

* They are called *Nunenguaks*, because the district in which they live is called *Nunenguak*.

merly, they were bold and impudent, and looked upon the Europeans as upon dogs, giving them the appellation, *Kablunets*, that is, Barbarians, but called themselves *Innuït*, which signifies Men. Now, they expressed their desire to hear the good news, and shewed, of their own accord, that they had no secret murdering knives concealed in their sleeves, or under their jackets, nor bows and arrows, nor darts hid in their kajaks *. They began to prove by facts, that their usual address to the Brethren, when they first met them, *Ikingutegekpogut*, (we are friends) was truth, and flowed from their hearts. The Brethren therefore conclude the journal which they sent to Europe with these words, “ We
 “ have reason to thank our Lord for preserving us hi-
 “ therto beyond all our expectation, and all our Bre-
 “ thren and Sisters and friends, who hear this, will
 “ praise the Lord with us.”

The owners resolved to send the ship again in the Spring of 1772; but as their former loss was considerably encreased by the last voyage, they determined to send her to fish upon the banks of Newfoundland, before she sailed to Labrador with the provisions sent for the Brethren's use this year.

The ship staid longer out than was expected, and did not return to London until December. This delay gave us much concern, and we were not without pain-

† A *Kajack* is a small boat, sharp at both ends, the ribs are made of wood; these are covered altogether with Seal skin, in the middle is a hole, into which the man thrusts his legs, and the lower part of his body, and sits with his legs extended. These boats hold but one man, who makes use of a paddle, and can get very speedily forward.

ful apprehensions ; but our good brethren in Nain § had reason to have more frightful and anxious thoughts on account of the ship's remaining so long absent from them.

After the departure of the ship in the foregoing year, they had enough to do to finish their house, and to secure themselves against the cold, which is much more intense there than in Greenland, although their house is almost seven degrees more to the South than our settlement in that country ||. The ice does not thaw, so as to clear the harbour, till towards the end of June.

Though they did all in their power to obtain fresh provisions by hunting, fowling, and fishing, yet they got but a very small quantity, having shot but two Reindeers, and about an hundred Ruypers, a bird a little bigger than a partridge. This was certainly but a small pittance for such a large family.

As the ship, after having concluded the fishing on the Banks, had a very slow passage to Labrador by reason of contrary winds and much ice, and did not reach Unity-Harbour until the end of October, the Brethren began to give up all hopes of her arrival, and of their getting any provisions this year. They had but two

§ They called their house Nain, and the harbour before the house, Unity-Harbour.

|| The reason of this is, that the N. W. wind, which is the severest, comes over an arm of the sea to our settlement in Greenland, by which means the cold is lessened ; whereas this severe wind, which blows the greatest part of the winter in Labrador, comes to Nain over an immense frozen continent.

pieces of flesh meat left, and very little of other provisions, and had the dismal prospect of starving for want of the necessaries of life. They therefore sought out and gathered all the red and black berries under the hills, dried them, and laid them carefully by. From the Esquimaux they could expect little or no assistance, notwithstanding the good will several of them testified; for these poor improvident savages suffer often themselves so great want, that some, almost every year, die through hunger †.

Thus situated, their distress was turned into the greater joy, when the ship at last, contrary to their expectations, appeared in Unity-Harbour on the 28th of October.* In their letters they express themselves on this occasion thus :

“ Had you seen the joy that reigned among us,
 “ when we heard that the ship was arrived, you would
 “ certainly never forget it ; for we had given her up,
 “ and had devoted ourselves to the most extreme degree
 “ of poverty. I cannot say that a dejected spirit ruled
 “ among us before ; but we were resolved to surren-
 “ der ourselves up to all circumstances, hoping and
 “ trusting that He who has sent us hither, who has
 “ counted our hairs, and without whose permission
 “ none of them could fall to the ground, would pre-
 “ serve us.” — In another letter it is remarked :

† The savages had been in such want the foregoing winter, that they were obliged to dig up ice eight feet thick on the strand, to get muscles and sea weeds to stay their hunger and preserve life.

* With the ship their number was increased by a brother who went to Labrador to dwell with them.

“ The

“ The ship’s staying away so long had two effects ;
 “ first, It convinced us that nothing was impossible to
 “ the Lord, and that he can command the seas that
 “ they should remain open, that, though so late in the
 “ year, the ship could come hither. Secondly, It made
 “ us more thankful for the provision sent to us”

Touching the main object of their settlement, one of them writes as follows :

“ The word of the cross, and of the great atoning
 “ Sacrifice, has been, at every opportunity, yea with-
 “ out cessation, preached by us unto the Esquimaux.
 “ Brother Drachart has particularly shewn great
 “ faithfulness herein ; for he scarcely ever speaks with
 “ them of any thing else. They hear it, and for the
 “ greatest part wonder at it. Sometimes they will not
 “ hear, go away from him, and begin to laugh ; but
 “ he is still patient, and goes on in hope. We dis-
 “ cover however joyful traces in some, that the word
 “ of the cross, which can even melt rocks, does not
 “ return without leaving some effects on one or ano-
 “ ther of them. May our Saviour grant that it may
 “ soon take deep root in their hearts !”

Notwithstanding the excessive cold in winter, some of the missionaries ventured to go over the ice and snow on a visit, and to preach the gospel to the Esquimaux in their winter houses, which are built of pieces of snow †. The missionaries were not only received and lodged

† The manner of forming these houses is this : they chuse a large drift of snow, dig an oval hole in it as large as they want the house. They then

lodged in a very friendly manner by the Esquimaux, but they were constantly visited by numbers of them as soon as they could drive from their habitations on the islands, to the Brethren's dwelling, over the frozen sea, on sledges drawn by dogs †. And as soon as the ice was gone, the visits were still more numerous §.

The confidence of the savages to the Brethren, had increased in such a manner, that they asked their advice in all their circumstances. A particular instance of *their confidence* and attention to the Brethren had occurred this year. There arose such a quarrel between some of the Esquimaux of *Nunenguak* and *Arbartok*, that the latter threatened to murder the former. Those of *Nunenguak* therefore fled to the Brethren, and desired their protection. The Brethren would not

cut out pieces of snow of three feet long, two feet broad, and one foot thick; with these they arch over this hole. Instead of a window, they cut a hole in the arch, and fix in a slab of ice, which gives tolerable light. They dig a long crooked low entry through the snow to the dwelling, and use a slab of frozen snow for the door. They leave an elevation of about twenty inches high in the midst of the house, on which they lay skins and sleep.

† These sledges are sometimes drawn by fourteen, by twenty, yea, they have seen twenty-eight dogs before such a sledge. They run all abreast. Their harness is all bound together to a thick thong, which, passing thro' a strong ring, is fastened to the sledge. The driver also binds all the reins together; his whip has a handle of about ten inches or a foot long, but the lash is from twenty to twenty-four feet in length, and he can govern his dogs tolerably expertly. These poor dogs are all half starved; they frequently eat their harness, and are then beaten most unmercifully.

§ The Esquimaux can go much more conveniently from place to place in their Kajaks and women's boats, when the water is open, than on their sledges over the ice, and are not so much exposed to the cold. This is the reason of the visits being more numerous in summer than in winter.

disappoint their good confidence, but promised to protect them, upon condition that they would concur with them in endeavouring to make peace between them and their enemies. Not long after, one of their enemies, who was resolved upon murder, came also upon the Brethren's land. By the desire of these Esquimaux, who complained of this man, and who were ten in number, among whom was *Tugluina*, the husband of the well-known woman *Mikak*, and his brother *Seguliak*, a meeting was appointed between him and them, in the presence of the Brethren. The ten accusers, one after the other, delivered their testimonies against the accused, and he defended himself as well as he could; but they pushed him so hard, that at length he began to weep. Then Brother Drachart began to shew unto them, that God would, by this opportunity, convince them of their wretched condition, and bring them into another and happier way of thinking. He asked the accused, whether he was sorry for his wicked murdering thoughts and intentions? whether he would lay them aside, and would for the future love his countrymen as his brethren? and some more such questions. As he answered all these questions in the affirmative, and not without emotion, he then addressed the accusers, and asked them whether they would forgive him, and, forgetting all that had passed, make peace, and would also for the future love him as their countryman? Nine of them expressed their readiness to forgive him, but one would not give an answer. Brother Drachart took this man aside into his chamber, and asked him why he would not forgive? At first he replied, that he did not believe that the accused meant

honestly

honestly what he spoke with his lips. Drachart represented unto him, that God could change the hearts; that he himself had such a bad heart that God must change it, why then would he not forgive his countryman? Through this conversation he became so tender, that he declared his willingness to lay aside all enmity. He went back into the assembly with Drachart, and publicly declared his readiness to forgive. Thus peace was not only established among them, but the Esquimaux resolved among themselves, that when any differences should for the future arise, or evil reports be spread of each other, they would go directly to the Brethren, beg to have such another meeting, and make up their differences amicably. Thus the Lord approved his servants to the savages as peace-makers, and thereby strengthened their faith, that he would, in his good time, open their hearts and ears that they may become obedient to the faith.

With this hope, and with an emboldened mind, they concluded the first year of their abode among these savages; and by the accounts received of their preservation and chearful perseverance in the work of the Lord, the Congregations of the Brethren were filled with praise and thanksgiving*.

But with a view to come more to the assistance of the mission by council and deed, both in their inter-

* We cannot help mentioning, that Sister Haven was delivered of a son, who was baptized in the Esquimaux language, in the presence of the Esquimaux, and called John-Benjamin. The Esquimaux are exceeding fond of this child.—Another Sister was delivered, but the child was still-born.

nal and external affairs, the Brethren, to whom the synod has committed the general care of all the Brethren's missions, resolved to send one of their number upon a visitation to Labrador in the spring, 1773. The Rev. Paul Eugenius Layritz was chosen for this purpose; and notwithstanding, his age, being sixty-six years old, he declared with cheerfulness his readiness to undertake this difficult and dangerous voyage. His wife also determined to go with him, to be a comfort and pleasure to the three sisters in Nain.

They arrived in Lindsey-house, Chelsea, on the 5th of May last year, and were resolved to go with the ship to Newfoundland, and either to stay on board while she was fishing, or to wait in St. John's until the ship should return from the banks, and then to embark for Labrador. The Owners of the ship were again losers, and therefore under the necessity of making an addition of fifty pounds to every hundred of the original stock, to enable them to fit out the ship for the next voyage. However, they ventured to resolve upon the purchase of a small vessel in Newfoundland, which should carry Brother and Sister Layritz, and Brother John Ludwig Beck, to Labrador as soon as the ice would permit.

Brother Beck is the eldest son of John Beck the oldest Missionary in Greenland. He was born in Greenland, but was educated from his seventh year in Germany; and some years ago was sent back to be thoroughly instructed in the Greenland language by his father, and thus be qualified to be employed in the mission among the Esquimaux.

They arrived safe and well in the harbour of St. John's on May the 5th, and much kindness was shewn to them by Mr. White, Judge of the Vice Admiralty Court, to whom the worthy Governor Schuddam had recommended Mr. Layritz, as also by Justice Gill and Mr. Gadden.

After Capt. Mugford and Brother John Hill had purchased and fitted out a small sloop, Brother Layritz and his company embarked, on the 22d of May, on board this little sloop, from twenty-five to thirty tons burthen, called the George, commanded by Mr. Wilson, and sailed for Labrador: but after sailing three days, they were stopt by a field of ice, which extended beyond the bounds of their sight, and were obliged to run with contrary wind, and in a storm, into the bay Notre-Dame. Eight days after, they ventured, in company with another sloop from Fogo, to sail through the broken pieces of ice, but were under the necessity of returning to the bay, and got back to their former place with great danger. At length they set forward on their voyage, sailing slowly along the coast; and on the 24th of June they made the Southern coast of Labrador, and the next day got sight of the first Esquimaux in eight Kajaks. These, upon being called to, in the manner and words usual in Greenland, soon came on board, behaved friendly, and were very attentive while some Greenland verses were sung, concerning the redemption by our Saviour. They invited the Brethren to visit them on Camp Island, where they had pitched their tents. The sloop accordingly sailed thither; and although these Esquimaux, who dwell to the
 South,

South, and are called Arbartoks, are of the worst kind, yet they received their visit in a very friendly manner, and about fifty old and young Indians heard the gospel, which Brother Layritz preached to them in their five tents, and Brother Beck interpreted; they listened with eager attention, and promised to visit the Brethren in Nain, and to hear more of these good words. Some days after, some of their countrymen, about two hundred in number, in six shallops, met the little sloop on the coast, surrounded her and behaved so peaceably, that they did not look like the former thieving and murdering Esquimaux. They all knew of the Brethren in Nain, and some related that they had slept there last winter, and that they had heard there, from Brother Drachart, the very same good words which Brother Layritz now told them.

At length they reached the latitude of Nain, after having escaped many dangers, and particularly one on the 15th of July, when they run upon a shoal, and were obliged to unload the vessel upon an island that lay near them, and thus, through the grace of God, they got off without damage. Here they were at a loss, not knowing how to steer safely through the islands and rocks which extend far into the sea before Unity-Harbour, but they got sight of an Esquimaux woman's boat*; the owner of which offered to pilot

* What they call a woman's boat, is a large boat, the ribs of which are made of wood, but the whole is covered with Seal skin. One of these boats will hold a whole family, with their utensils, and a great number of dogs. They are always rowed by the women, and therefore called women's boats.

them through Byron's road to Nain. Thus they arrived safe and well in Unity-Harbour on July 25th, and were received with the greater joy, which the Brethren and Sisters expressed by floods of tears, as their visit was quite unexpected, and particularly because a Sister was come to them. The very Esquimaux, who to the number of two hundred had pitched twenty-one tents on the strand, were full of joy. Eighteen Kajaks came to meet the sloop as she run into the harbour, and were hung to the sloop on the right and on the left, and the Esquimaux came on board to welcome the visitors. When they landed, they were surrounded by two hundred young and old, and escorted by them to the house of the Missionaries with every token of joy.

At the numerous visits of the Esquimaux, of whom thirty-six tents* full had been there at once in the beginning of July, the Missionaries were used to visit them every morning in their tents, and to enquire, whether they had kept what they had heard in an honest and good heart? Towards evening they had always a meeting with the Esquimaux, to which they were called by the sound of a bell. In these meetings, first a verse out of the Greenland Hymn Book, was given out and sung, which many of them retain, both as to the words and tune, so that they can join very well in singing them. After this the gospel was preached to them in a concise manner. Sometimes they were

* A tent is so spacious that it can contain a family of six, eight, ten, and sometimes more, with all their utensils.

asked, whether they understood what they had heard ? and upon their desiring it, it was farther explained to them. The Esquimaux themselves often asked for a more particular explanation. In the first meeting, at which Brother Layritz was present, he delivered a short discourse which Brother Drachart interpreted : Then one of the most distinguished heads of a family* stood up, and answered in the name of the rest, that they were not only very thankful to the Brethren that they came unto them, dwelt among them, and told them such good words, but he added, “ we will give our hearts to the Saviour,” whom they call Anaurisfok §, “ we will believe in, and love him.”

They also declared the same, some days after, in the presence of Lieutenant Curtis, who had been sent by the Governor in a king's schooner, to see how the Brethren went on, and at the same time to survey the coast.

Upon this occasion, about thirty of the heads of families were assembled. Mr. Curtis desired Brother Drachart to inform them, that his Excellency the Governor had given orders to acquaint them, that they must leave off stealing and murdering ; for who-

* There are no national chiefs or heads either among the Greenlanders or Esquimaux. They all are equals, though some Angekoks, who are cunning, and have bodily strength, have some influence upon their countrymen, but not as chief or head. The head of a family has naturally an authority over his family.

§ This word signifies, He that saves or delivers from dreadful misfortunes.

soever should be found guilty of these crimes, for the future, must be punished with death. Further, they should go no more to the South under pretence of getting wood for their bows and arrows; but if they were under a necessity to go thither, they should not do it without taking with them a certificate from the Brethren. Hereupon they replied, It is right that a thief and murderer be punished with death, for he deserves it; but since they had heard the gospel of Jesus, they had no more stolen or murdered, and they would, for the future, do so no more. They had not been at the South these three years, since they (the Nunenguaks) had heard the Governor's proclamation; and if any of them should be obliged to go to the South, they would bring a letter from their Brethren. † Mr. Curtis assured them of the love of the King and of the Governor, and they expressed their thankfulness in a very hearty and friendly manner.

This testimony must, agreeable to the truth, be given to them, that they become from time to time more attached to, and more confident towards the Brethren. When they go from Nain to the islands or the sea, they commit the goods they most value to the Brethren to keep for them; yea, they often leave their wives and children under the inspection and care of the Brethren until they return. On this account the Brethren resolved to build a store house for them, in which they can lay up such provisions as they can procure and spare in summer, that so they may be able to dwell with the Missionaries in winter, and to hear the word of God daily and richly.

† By "their Brethren," they meant the missionaries.

It cannot be said as yet with certainty that they are converted, and therefore the Missionaries will not baptize any, till they find souls who are truly awakened by the Holy Ghost, and are indeed earnestly concerned and desirous to obtain grace through the redemption by the blood of Christ. It must however be owned, that the preaching of the gospel unto them has not been in vain. The greatest part of those who dwell around the Missionaries, are often much affected at what they hear of the Saviour of sinners, and have a respect and awe for the name of Jesus. But it is very hard to convince them of their sinfulness and corruption; for altho' they were formerly the most abject slaves of their brutal passions, and committed all manner of fleshly sins, theft and murder, yet they know how to excuse themselves with all kind of subterfuges as well as the Europeans: The liars comfort themselves and make use of the plea, that they are no thieves; the thieves that they are no murderers; and the murderers that they are not as bad as the Kablunet. And although they have some notion that there is a great Lord, who created heaven and earth, yet they have no kind of divine worship among them, or any way of paying devotion to this Creator. They seem to be also without any sense of condemnation, and are always very expert at stifling remorse of conscience. But since they have heard the gospel, they begin to see and acknowledge the heinousness of sin, also to confess that they are sinners, and many feel the necessity of having a Saviour. The divine efficacy of the gospel has approved itself unto them. The example of the Missionaries and their assistants, and their walk conformable to the gospel, is

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a confirmation of what is preached unto them, and attended with the pleasing effect, that the Esquimaux instead of being, as formerly, like a herd of wild boars of the forest, appear now, as Brother Drachart expresses it, "like a flock of sheep round about the Brethren."

Formerly, no European would have ventured himself alone with the Esquimaux, or to have spent a night with them, on any consideration: but now the Missionaries visit them in their winter habitations at a considerable distance from Nain, sleep among them many nights successively, preach there the gospel to them, reprove them on account of their heathenish customs, and even stop the mouths of their *Angekoks*, or pretended conjurers, ordering them to be silent in the midst of their incantations. Nothing can be said to all this, but, *This is the Lord's doing!* For the poor Esquimaux are so bewitched with the fable of *Torngarsuk*, the evil spirit, and their *Torngaks*, or familiar spirits, that they undertake nothing without consulting them, and are terribly afraid of them. They have among them even women, called *Illiseitfoks*, who pretend to have such a spirit that make a kind of rumbling noise in their bodies, which noise these women afterwards explain, and that is looked upon as a prediction. They are so attached to these old fables and deceits, that it is very difficult to turn them from them. They would gladly keep their *Torngaks*, and at the same time believe in our Saviour. The *Angekoks* observe, that, by the preaching of the gospel, their craft is in danger of being entirely ruined, and therefore use
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all their cunning and influence that the poor Esquimaux may not become believers.

All this makes the following example, which occurred in the foregoing year, the more remarkable :

A man, whose name was *Annauke*, departed this life, calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus. The Brethren saw him the first time, four years ago, at Chateau-Bay, when the peace was made by governor Palliser with the Esquimaux. He then had all the appearance of a thief and murderer ; but in the following years, heard the gospel frequently, and experienced the power thereof in a remarkable manner, so that his features were softened, and from a bear he became a lamb. He pitched his tent in Nain, stayed there, in the year 1772, till autumn, and in November removed to his winter-house, which was at a considerable distance from the Brethren. He came sometime after from thence, and that on foot*, to Nain, merely to hear the gospel. Towards the end of the year and the beginning of January it is not possible, either for the Europeans or Esquimaux, to pass or repass, as there are then commonly the greatest falls of snow, the ice first sets in, but is not passable on the sea. Therefore the Brethren heard nothing more of *Annauke* till Brother John Schneider visited the Esquimaux in their winter-houses, and *Annauke's* wife came herself in February to the Brethren in Nain.

* This is a strong evidence of his eagerness to hear the gospel, as the Esquimaux are not accustomed to travel on foot ; in summer they go from island to island in their kajaks or boats, and in winter on their sledges.

Then the Brethren heard that *Annauke* fell sick in December; and it was soon evident that his end approached. The Esquimaux are so extremely afraid of death, that they are shocked and terrified to hear even the name of a dead person mentioned. But *Annauke* turned to our Saviour, and declared that he did not chuse to stay any longer in the world, but would go unto Him. His wife, *Niviarfina*, when she observed that his end approached, began, according to the custom of the Esquimaux, to howl and cry, and asked him, "O, my dear husband, wilt thou leave me and thy two children?" The dying *Annauke* answered, "Weep not, I go to the Saviour, who loves mankind so much." This was the more striking, as he had no christian at hand to instruct him, nor none near him whom he might be desirous to please, by speaking of Jesus, and expressing his reliance upon and love to him. And what was still a more clear proof that this was the effect of a real work of the Holy Ghost in his heart, was, that he (as the *Angekok*, who lived in the same place, related to Brother Drachart with displeasure) would not have an *Angekok* to come to him in his sickness, although the Esquimaux, as soon as they fall sick, send directly for the *Angekok*, who acts the Physician, making use of certain spells over the sick for their recovery. Yea, *Annauke*, since his death, is commonly described by the Esquimaux themselves, as the man whom the Saviour took to himself. The Missionaries, therefore, by all what they before had seen and heard of this man, and by the manner of his departure out of this

this life, can justly look upon him as the firstling* in that country, upon whom our Saviour certainly fulfilled his word, “Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.”

The above instance gave the Brethren more courage to form a class of Catechumens of some in whose hearts there appeared evident traces of the work of the Holy Ghost. In this class they will be more particularly instructed in the ways of God.

The Brethren have also resolved to erect a proper church for the Esquimaux in which the gospel may be preached to some hundreds at once, as the room in which they have preached in their house is much too small.

Certain it is that the Missionaries and their Assistants lead a most difficult, inconvenient, and, to flesh and blood, uncomfortable life in this rough and inhospitable climate. The cold is, as has been already mentioned, and as the thermometer proves, much more intense than in Greenland. And although they burn in their large stoves of cast iron great quantities of wood, by day and night; yet the windows and walls are all

* The boy Karpik, of whom mention is made, in the *Succinct View of the Missions established among the Heathen by the Church of the Brethren*; page 25 and 26, was certainly the firstling of this nation. *Annauke* is here mentioned as the firstling, being the first Esquimaux who departed happily, calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus in Labrador.

the winter covered with ice, and the bed cloaths freeze to the wall. Rum freezes in the air like water, and rectified spirits, in the coldest weather, soon become thick like oil. The thermometer is commonly from December to April seventy degrees below the freezing point. The sea freezes so far out, between the islands, that they cannot get a sight of open water from December to June. Some of the Brethren ventured to go in February to the Esquimaux about forty miles distant from Nain, but they endured the most extreme hardships from the cold. Though wrapped up in furs, yet their eye lids froze in such a manner together, that they were obliged continually to pull away the ice from them, and to keep their eyes open with their fingers. One of them returned with a pain in his side; another with his hand frozen and swelled like a bladder; and it was a mercy of the Lord, whom they serve, that they were cured. The Esquimaux, who live chiefly upon blubber, and who have probably fatter and more oily blood, can certainly endure the cold better than the Europeans; but there are however instances that the Esquimaux themselves are frozen to death in winter. The few summer months are, on the other hand, so much the hotter, the thermometer rising to the eighty-sixth degree: but then they are plagued with an amazing swarm of malignant musketoos, which sting so violently, that they often return home with swelled faces.

There can be no expectations of any thing like agriculture, so as to produce grain; this is evident
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from the trials already made. Some small gardens which the Brethren have laid out and cultivated, produce some fallad, turnips, hardy cabbages and radishes, but potatoes freeze when they have shot up no higher than about half a foot.

By hunting and fishing they have hitherto been able to procure but very little provision, because their situation upon the continent is not at all favourable thereto. Besides, the great number of Esquimaux dogs, that must seek their own maintenance, prevent the success they might have in catching fish, as these half-starved dogs, at low water, run into the nets, tear out and devour the fish, and moreover tear the nets to pieces.

Thus the Brethren must be supported chiefly by the provision sent to them annually from Europe, such as flour, salt meat, rice, peas and barley, and are heartily thankful, partly, that friends are always found who contribute thereunto, and partly that they can earn something by the work of their hands to lighten in some measure the expence of supporting them. They begun last year to build boats for the Esquimaux, and to make sundry implements for their work, and utensils for their houses, and receive in payment whale-bone and blubber, which they send hither towards their expences.

By the building boats we have reason to hope that one great advantage will be obtained, namely, that the Esquimaux will be delivered from the temptation
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of going to the South to steal boats. And by the implements and utensils made for them by the Brethren, they will be from time to time more enabled to get and increase what is necessary for their own support.

Though, by these means, the outward situation of these poor savages may be greatly improved and rendered more human, yet it is certainly of incomparably greater importance, that they be brought to Jesus Christ by the preaching of the gospel; that they be sanctified by the true faith in Him; and thereby, with greater certainty, be civilized and made moral human creatures.

It is this consideration that enables the Missionaries and their assistants, notwithstanding their most difficult situation outwardly, to hold out with cheerfulness and full of faith, in that call which the Lord has given them, until the Esquimaux, in this remote part of the earth, shall see the salvation of God. Brother Layritz, on his safe arrival here with his wife on the 28th of October, assured us, as an eye witness, that this was the disposition of those Brethren and Sisters*.

They had this last year, by means of the sloop, an opportunity of visiting six habitations of the Esquimaux which lie farther North; they were received every where in a friendly and confident manner, and most pressinglly entreated by the poor savages (many of whom had never seen an European before) to come and

* We will just mention that another child had been born in this year, and departed this life during Brother Layritz's visit, and was the first corpse laid in the burying ground there.

dwell among them, and to bring them the good words of their Creator and Saviour.

Is the acquiring wealth and fortunes, which last not for ever, but pass away, allowed, every where, to be a sufficient motive for long voyages and the enduring great hardships? surely it is a more noble motive, yea, it is of infinitely greater use, if considered merely in a rational point of view, to endure hardships, even the greatest, if souls, who are however our fellow-creatures, are thereby saved from death, brought into a state of peace and happiness, and obtain a well-grounded hope of a blessed immortality. The love of Christ, who, though he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, submitted to be despised and rejected, and became obedient unto death, yea, to the death of the shameful cross, to redeem us, must certainly impel the hearts of the Missionaries, stimulate their zeal, and make them willing to persevere with patience in the midst of all, even the greatest hardships.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, who has not permitted the labour and trouble of our Brethren among the heathen to be in vain. We have now had many years experience, that our gracious Lord has crowned the simple preaching of the gospel of his incarnation, sufferings and death, with blessing, has owned it in grace, that thereby the eyes of the
heathen

heathen have been opened, and they have been turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the living God. What the most just and excellent moral precepts cannot effect, what all the power of philosophy cannot produce, what all the eloquence and arguments of man cannot accomplish, that is done by the word of reconciliation through the blood of Christ. Of this the heathen, who have received the faith, are a living and incontestable proof.

To profelyte men from one superstition to another, from one speculative system to another, or from one sect or outward form of worship to another, whether by arguments, or outward pomp, or by any other methods, is indeed no business, for the sake of which our Missionaries would give themselves so much trouble and undergo such difficulties. But to be instruments to direct and bring souls to Him, in whom the Gentiles shall trust, and to whom every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth, it is well worth while to venture life and limb to effect this. For it is indubitable, that when men, though ever so wild and savage by nature, are brought to the knowledge of salvation in Christ Jesus, by the Holy Ghost, they will of course become good and useful subjects, and benevolent fellow citizens of the world.

We, therefore, recommend this mission among the Esquimaux to the prayers and intercession of all those who feel the petition in the Lord's prayer, "Thy
kingdom

kingdom come ; thy will be done on earth as it is
“ in heaven.”

Our prayer unto the Lord is, that there may never be wanting willing and faithful labourers among us, who enjoying, in their own hearts, the redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ, having their feet shod, are ready to go forth, and to bear the gospel unto the ends of the earth ; and that all those who bear the name of Christ, and acknowledge that he alone is their salvation, may depart from all iniquity, and with contrite but gladdened hearts, bow their knees and confess that Jesus is the Lord to the glory of God the Father. Amen !

F I N I S .