

Dänisch-Hallesche Mission

Propagation of the Gospel in the East

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Letter I. Containing an Account of the Journey from Denmark to the Cape
of Good Hope.

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A N
 Account of the Success
 O F T W O
 DANISH Missionaries,
 Sent to the
 EAST-INDIES,
 F O R T H E
 CONVERSION
 O F T H E
 HEATHENS *in* MALABAR.

LETTER I.

*Containing an Account of the Journey from
Denmark to the Cape of Good Hope.*

Dear Friends,

TH E further we find our Selves re-
 moved from you, by the wonderful Pro-
 vidence of God, the more fervent and
 sincere grows our Love to you ; being
 assured, that as we remember you both before
 B God,

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God, and in our daily Conversation, to our mutual Joy and Comfort ; so you, according to your wonted Love, will be no less mindful of us, and consequently gladly receive any account concerning our present Circumstances. Seing then we are by the favour of God safely arrived in this long wished for Harbour, and now lighting on a fair opportunity to convey Letters to *Europe* ; we thought it our Duty, to send you the first News of our surprising Preservation and Happy Voyage to these Parts ; to the Praise of God's Goodness, and Edification of many well-disposed Souls.

The 29th of November 1705. We imbarqued with great joy in a Ship call'd the *Princess Sophia Hedwig*, being dismissed by the well-wishers to our Undertaking with Tokens and Presents convenient for our Expedition. This we look'd upon as a pledge, that God had not left our Acquaintance contracted in *Denmark* without a Blessing. Thus attended with many hearty wishes we cheerfully went on board, hoping that the Prefence of God would go before, and lovingly incline unto us the Hearts of that barbarous People we were designed for.

The 30th of November we set Sail, and arrived the Night following at *Helsingoehr*. Here a Mariner of our Ship tumbling down from the Main-Mast, miserably broke his Neck, to our great surprise ; and another falling into the Sea, was narrowly caught by the Hair and saved. The wind being contrary, we could not move hence, till the 4th of December and the 6th Instant we reach'd in stormy weather a *Swedish* Harbour, not far from *Gottenbourg*, surrounded with pleasant and delightful Rocks. Here we lay Wind-bound
for

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for eight Days together. The 14th of *December* we sailed again, and came the next Day into the North-Sea, where we both fell Sea-sick, but soon recovered by the Help of God. The 16th we left *Norway* on the right, and *Hitland* with other little Islands on the left; near which a Boy dead of the Small Pox was on the side of our Ship buried in the wide Sea, having before a Funeral Sermon Preach'd for him. The 22^d we sailed by the Western Islands call'd *Orcades*. After this we left *England* and *Ireland* to the left. The 27th we enter'd the *Spanish* Seas, whose towring Billows received us very stoutly, the Ship seeming as if it were carried through a deep Vale, betwixt two lofty Mountains. The sight we had of the marvellous Works of God, did not a little chear up our Spirits. And the more the Storms and Roarings of the Seas broke in upon us, the more increas'd the Joy and Praise of God in our Mouths; seeing we have such a potent and powerful Lord for our Father, whom we may daily approach unto, and as confident Children, put up our Prayers and Petitions to him.

The 1st of *Jan.* 1706. We met two Ships bound from *America* for *England*. At the first sight, we took them to be *French* Privateers, and our Men fell a charging their Guns, expecting to be attacked. But they perceiving our Preparations in order to receive them, suspected us likewise, none trusting to the Colours put up on both sides. At last they sent one to inform us who they were, and hearing from whence we came, we parted after a discharge of some of our Cannons. We sailed here commonly in Day and Night about forty or fifty Leagues, and pass'd at length the

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Azoran Islands, which we left on the right Hand. The 9th of *January* we drew near the Coasts of *Africa*, where the Weather began to be a little warmer. From thence sailing by the Turkish *Barbary*, we were in danger of Pyrates; but under God's Protection we happily touch'd the *Canary-Islands*.

The 15th passing under the Tropick of *Cancer*, to the Torrid Zone, we perceived the Heat to be very excessive, attended with Lightnings, and terrible Thunder-Claps. The 20th we came to the *Souds-Islands*. The 15th we left *Cape of Verde* on the left Hand. Here we had continually, till we came to the Equinoctical-Line, a small side-Wind. The Heat grew so piercing, that our Crew, to get a little refreshment, would often throw themselves into the Sea, and stay therein all the while the Ship was becalmed.

The 9th of *Feb.* we pass'd at last the Line very successfully. After this we had a contrary Wind for a matter of eight Weeks together, and were quite driven upon the Coasts of *America*, and forced to Sail all along the Coast of *Brasilia* towards the South, being but a few Miles from it. Under the 18th degree on this side the Equinoctial-Line, near the Coast of *America*, lies an Island, that is sunk into the Sea, called *Ambrothos*; and we finding our selves very near striking upon it, our Seamen were not a little afraid, that they should be obliged either to Sail back to the Line, with the side-wind that attended us, and to steer their Course up higher to the East; or that they might suffer Shipwrack unawares, as had happen'd to many before. But by the Help of God we safely got over this difficulty; which caused such an extraordinary joy in the whole Company, that the next
Day

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Day was not only kept as a Day of Thanksgiving, but we had also a considerable Collection made for the Benefit of the Poor.

The 5th of *March* we passed the Tropick of *Capricorn*, being tossed up and down in the huge Ocean, according as we were driven by contrary Winds, and having passed some degrees, by Sailing forty, seventy and more Leagues. At length, we came sensibly again into the Cold, and so far towards South, as perhaps no *East-India* Ship has ever reached before. The whole Company was desirous to put in at the *Cape*, partly to take in some Refreshment; partly because we knew not, whether we should from hence find out so strait a Passage to the *East-Indies*, as from the *Cape*. We steer'd therefore our Course hither with as much Expedition as possibly we could. The 31st of *March* we came to an unknown and uninhabited Island, call'd *Tristante Conto*; from thence sailing towards the North-East, we at last happily arrived here the 23^d of *April*, after we had plyed from *Coppenhaguen* to the Equinoctical Line 1300, but from thence to this place 1500 Leagues; of which the Pilots by their Mathematical Instruments can make a pretty probable guess.

And this is a short draught of our Journey thus far finish'd, and of the Adventures attending us hither. As to the manner of spending our time all this while, we would have ye know, that never a more convenient opportunity has been offer'd us, than even this, for gathering in some true and substantial wisdom so much pleasing to God. For the nearer we touch'd upon the very brink of Death, the more we endeavoured thoroughly to

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acquaint our selves with the Great God, and to adore him in Spirit and in Truth; that so we might be readily prepared, whenever the Lord should be pleased to bury us in the merciless Waves of the Sea. And this consideration must needs have been a cause of much Good on our side. The Faculties of our Souls became hereby more and more purified, and consequently fit, to receive the gracious Operations of Divine Wisdom. Our Meditations, and whatever we read, saw or heard, in things both *Spiritual* and *Natural*, we could now, under this disposition of mind, deeper penetrate into, and improve to its main and genuine scope. In the Morning, at Noon, and at Night we had usually some Exercise of Piety in the Ship, handling the Word of God, Praying, Singing and Praising the Lord for all his wonderful Mercies vouchsafed unto us. And this proved an excitement to many others that were about us. The rest of the Day we employed likewise in reading and pondering some Scriptures, with such Discourses, as might stir up the mind to contemplate the Wonders of God in the Works of the Creation, which were now the daily objects of our Senses. Sometimes we endeavour'd to Praise God with a Consort of Musick, both Vocal and Instrumental, and by some melodious Hymns awakened the inward Harmony of our Souls to Praise and Magnifie God.

Thus we passed our precious time, both with great advantage and delicious repast to our Minds, so that the same seemed rather too short than too long under such useful Exercises. Nay, we should now count it a small matter, if it was our Lot to live a Sea-faring Life for some Years together,

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ther, provided the Lord did grant us our Health. For this very Voyage has been hitherto an Experimental School, wherein we are not so much taught the bare Letter of Divinity, as the lively and practical Sense of the inward power and sweetness thereof. At this rate has the Lord, under various crosses and tryals, opened unto us more and more the Mysteries of Salvation hid in the Letter, and lively impressed the Divine Truth on our Minds, to the end we might be able to deliver it unto others again, with the greater Boldness, from the stock of our own Experience. All which makes us intirely rely upon the paternal Assistance of God in the discharge of that Office, wherewith he has entrusted us, and not to be terrified at all by any Sufferings, Perplexities and Persecutions, that perhaps might attend a Work of this Nature. And tho' in the beginning we should meet with many lets and impediments, obstructing the Work of Reformation among Heathens; yet we hope God will bestow a Blessing on our Conversation with the *Christians* residing there, of which we have had several Proofs in our Expedition hitherwards.

In the mean time we trust to you, dear Friends, you will not cease to put up your hearty Prayers to the Lord on our behalf, to the end, that, as we have hitherto enjoyed his blessed influence upon our Souls; so we may be further encouraged, humbly to wait for a good Success of our Labours, after having safely overcome the Difficulties, we still are to pass thorough before our Journey's end. We cannot sufficiently express what comfort we felt within us, whenever we remembered you and other Friends, allied to

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us in the Spirit of Love, being mindful of your incessant Prayer for the enlarging of the Kingdom of Christ. Therefore we would have ye know, that as you have been with us, so we have been with you, when you were offering up your Supplications on our behalf. May the Lord unite our Hearts in this Bond of Love to all Eternity! May He graciously hear whatever we desire in one Mind and Spirit, for the increase of his Glory and the Propagating of his Truth.

Besides this, you must know, that the Lord has also supported our Bodies hitherto with things needful for our outward subsistence. The Captain of the Ship, in whose Affection we had but a small share at first, soon after proved so kind, that he made all things common with us. God inclin'd his Heart with the rest that were in the Ship, in such a manner, that he rejoiced in lending us a helping Hand, whenever it did lie in his way; he being within himself, by the means of our Ministry and daily Conversation, convinc'd, that we were sincerely disposed for promoting the good of their Souls.

Some other things and Curiosities which you might be willing to hear, we cannot at present, for want of time, give you a full account of. However, from what has been said, you may probably infer, that God is with us of a Truth, and that he perhaps is about to blow up a fire of his Knowledge through our Ministry, chiefly amongst the Christians dispersed here and there; *and how glad would we be, if it was already kindled!*

Further: We found not a little Satisfaction in viewing the Wonders of God, gloriously display-
ed

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ed in the Seas. The various Sorts of Fishes have afforded us many an innocent sport and diversion. It often seemed, as if a whole multitude was gather'd together in the Sea, with intent to storm the Ship. Some marched in great Pomp and State, accompanied with a large train of lesser ones. We catch'd a great many of those that are call'd *Hayen*. Some of 'em are above six Yards long, having six Rows of Teeth in their Mouth, which is under the Belly. Their Skin is of the Thickness of a Finger, and their Brain is said to be useful in Physick. Their strength exceeds that of many Men, and they together with their attendance are very pleasant to look on, being never left by em, till they be drawn up by Ropes into the Ship. In warm Weather we saw every Day Flying-Fishes, hovering about us in great numbers. It is impossible, to mention particularly all the several other Sorts, that came within the reach of our sight. Near the Line, a so call'd *Sea-devil* swimming up to us, roved all day long about our Ship, but we could not take him. He had great Horns, in thickness and length equally proportioned, and was for the rest very ghastly to look on. We saw Birds of many differing sorts. In fair Weather we sat down on the Deck of the Ship, and gave Vent to our Mind, rejoicing in the Contemplation of the pleasant Scituation of the Skies and Seas, and from thence took an Opportunity, to entertain our selves with Discourses, concerning the Glory of the World to come, and the lively Hope of those that have a Share in it. But besides this, we had a particular Cabin in the Ship, left to our own Use,

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Use, and very convenient for our Studies and Exercises of Piety.

To sum up the whole, we cannot sufficiently thank God for the signal Benefits conferred upon us, in relation both to Soul and Body, in this otherwise so dangerous Expedition. And we write this to you in a deep Sense of Humility, for no other End, than that you may join with us in Prayers and Praises; nay, that all such as know us, and sincerely seek God, might see with what Glory, Wisdom and Providence the Lord leads those that are of his Household, if they do but fully and resignedly depend upon his Paternal Goodness. We hoped we should have met with, among the Christians here, such Souls, as might have a true Hunger and Thirst after the Word of God; most of them being *German Lutherans*, left without a Minister: but hitherto we find little among 'em, besides a Religion raised on Maxims of State and Policy, void of all substantial Piety and Truth that is in Jesus. Every one pretends, he cannot serve God so well in these Parts, as in his own Country; and so they think they had rather put it quite off, till they come home again. On the contrary, we can't but own, that we found the *Dutch* here in a far better Condition as for matters of Religion. They have set up a very useful Exercise for the Catechizing of Children. They had their Bibles always ready at hand, and loved to hear us talk of Piety and Religion. Their Minister is a learned and wise Man, and very kind to the *Lutherans* here. We found with him many good Books of some of our best Divines, and hope our Conversation with him, will not prove altogether useless. We presented

sented him with Mr. *Freylinghausen's Fundamental Principles of Divinity*, lately published. We were overjoyed, to hear the Children of the Blacks answer so prettily to all the Questions of the Christian Religion; but were much amazed to see, that the Christians use their Slaves so hard, and (as it was said,) deny 'em the Benefit of *Baptism*, whereby they might be initiated into the Christian Religion.

As soon as we landed, the *Hottentots* received us very kindly, in Hopes of a Present. They are truly a wretched and miserable People. They have no divine Worship at all; live in little Cottages, such as with us are the baking Ovens; they have Sheep-Skins hanging about them, the Head and other Parts of the Body being every where left naked. The Women twist Sheep-Guts about their Legs, and wear all sorts of Metal in their Hair and Neck. They are very civil to Strangers, and make odd and ridiculous Postures. They have a Captain, who leads them; but God is called by 'em the *Captain-General*. Most of 'em speak pretty well *Low-Dutch*. We have been several times in their Huts, giving every one a Piece of Money, or some other little thing; which made them love us so affectionately, that they cried after us in broken *Dutch*: *Good Christians, good Christians, fine Christian Men. We also such Christian Men, &c.* They observe many Ceremonies among them; but being asked, why they do this or that? They can give no other Reason for it, than that it is the Manner of the *Hottentots*. When the Moon is full, they express an extraordinary Joy all the Night long with Hollowing, Shouting, and Dancing. Their Language is very uncouth
and

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and a sort of Gibberish which no Body can learn. They are otherwise of a Temper good enough, and a suitable Proportion of Body; but stink terribly, greasing themselves daily with Fat. They are a People overfond of their Liberty, and not to be induced to subject themselves to the Christians. However, they make us Christians ashamed in many Particulars. They are very kind one to another, and so communicative in their Love, that if one has something that is good, he shareth it among all the rest. They are content with very little; if you would give them a *Ducat*, they will hardly take it, requiring only a *Groat*, by Reason they don't use to spend more a Day; and being for the next unconcerned. They are very ready to serve one: If one giveth 'em a *Groat*, they will run as many Miles for it as you please. They are very faithful in things committed to their Care, and never pilfer the least Farthing from the Christians, tho' they should see a Store of Money about them. They are not seized with the Plague of *Ambition*, *Covetousness*, and *anxious Cares* for the Belly, like our Christians in *Europe*. Every one is solicitous for the present Day. There is no Precedence or any Degree of Dignity observed among them, save that the Captain sits always in the Middle of them, and is the first that falls to Eating or Drinking. We can truly say that their Condition moved us to an hearty Compassion, giving us at the same time a fair Opportunity, to thank God the more fervently for the great Mercies conferred upon us Christians beyond these Wretches.

We found here Mr. *Colben*, a Student from *Hall*, sent hither from *Berlin* by the Lord Privy-Counsellor *Crosek*, to make Astronomical Observations in
this

this Place through the whole Year. We took up our Lodging with a Student from *Coningsberg*. The 25th of *April*, we were upon the so called *Lion-Mountain*, which is extraordinary lofty. And because we got up quite alone, we sung some spiritual Hymns to the Praise and Glory of God, in Consideration of his manifold Goodness. The *Tassel-* and *Devil's-Mountain*, as they call it, being excessively high, we forbore to ascend. Truly, we think, one has a World of Reason, to be surpris'd at the marvellous Works of God, so conspicuously display'd in Nature. The *Dutch East-India* Company has here an extraordinary fine and spacious Garden, stored with all Manner of rare and precious Plants. We saw in it strange kinds of Beasts ; as a *Sea-Cow*, resembling much the Description given by *Job* of *Behemoth* ; a *Rhinoceros*, almost as big as an Elephant ; an *Elk*, a *wild Horse*, being in part white and red-streaked ; a *Mouse-Dog*, *Badgers*, *wild Goats* with crooked Horns ; likewise *Harts* quite differing in Shape from those in *Europe* : *Lions*, *Fishes*, with strong sharp-edged Prickles instead of Fins. One of them had a Bump under the Body, which when blown up, the Pricks rose up to that Degree, that no Body durst touch him. There was also at the same time a Fish caught in a Net, of so diffusive a Poison, that if one touched him only with his Shoe, he could not walk for some time upon that Foot, feeling a sensible pain struck thro' the whole Body. The Seamen could not remember that they ever saw such another. Besides this, the Country affords very good Corn with other Fruits, but their Crop was already gathered in *January* last. Their Winter had now begun ; but it was even then so warm, as
it

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it useth to be with us in the hottest Summer-days. The whole Country with all its product is very healthy.

We hope to sail from hence in a few Days, to move near to the *East-Indies*. The Lord be with us, as He has been hitherto, and accompany us with the Protection of his Holy Angels! May he keep us in his fear, and grant us to walk constantly in the Way of Truth! May he give us a holy Boldness to spread the Good Savour of his Knowledge every where, that his Name be Praised in and by us, his Kingdom enlarged, and his Will be done wholly and perfectly! And now, dear Friends and Brethren, be ye also heartily committed to the Grace and Love of God. The Lord support you by his Divine Power in the daily discharge of that Function, he has intrusted you with. May he inspire you with Courage, and an unshaken presence of mind, to push on the Work of Reformation, without fainting! and reward at last your fidelity with temporal and eternal Blessings! Remember us to your Families, and to all them that are united to us in Love. The Lord Jesus be with your Spirit, *Amen*. We remain

Yours, &c.

*Dated in Africa, from
the Cape of Good Hope
April the 30th, 1706.*

*Bartholomew Ziegenbalgh.
Henry Plutsch.*

L E T-