THE
ANNUAL REPORT
OF
MISSION TO THE ABORIGINES
LAKE MACQUARIE,
FOR MCCCXXXVII.

Eulogar, Lake Macquarie,
December 31st, 1836.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM GRANT BROUGHTON, D. D.,
LORD BISHOP OF AUSTRALIA,

Mr. Lord,

Your return to this Colony shows me again the honor of presenting to you, my usual report of progress in the Aboriginal Mission during the present year.

In March last, I was subpoenaed to attend the Criminal Court, in the case of alleged murder of a black, by one of his own companions; and the question was raised for the consideration of the Court, in whose defense, whether he could be put on his trial in a British Court, whereas, should he be acquitted, he must again stand trial amongst his own people? This was executed, and it was laid down by the Court, that the Aborigines are subject to, and under the protection of the British Law. But it remains yet to be determined whether the Aborigines can be admitted as witnesses in our Courts, they having no form of solemn subscription, or any description of oath amongst themselves. A black may be falsely accused of murder, by the very murderess himself: he accused might be tried and adjudged by his whole tribe, with whom, perhaps, he was living at a distance from the scene of crime, at the very moment in which the brutality was perpetrated! yet such is the present state of the law, a black witness having been rejected by the Court, that not one of his people could enter the witness-box to speak in evidence, being incompetent in consequence of our forms of justice in the administration of justice, although they are now proclaimed to be subject to, and under the protection of our Laws of Law. This anomaly requires the consideration of those competent to provide a remedy, lest impartial justice should hereafter be impaired when some cases of considerable excitement may possibly arise between the Aborigines and Colonists. I respectfully call the attention of the Judges of our Courts, of the Legislative Council, of the British Parliament, to the probability and injustice of these cases.

No act of violence against Europeans, bringing the blacks to trial before the Criminal Court has occurred this year. The deploréd murder of Mr. Cunningham, during the expedition in the Interior, or the melancholy catastrophe in the destruction of the shipwrecked vessel with part of his companions, and futile detention of his widow, by the blacks far northward in the territory, while they call forth the tenderest sympathy towards the victimized sufferers, occurred not within the limits of the Colony.

At the request of the Attorney-General, during my stay in Sydney, I visited and questioned the blacks who were in custody at Port Jackson, on the charge of being concerned in the murder of Mr. Cunningham. With the assistance of the Aborigines, who were under sentence of transportation to that place, I was enabled to understand, though a different account was given by the prisoner. The subject of our enquiry was, that—"His own name was Poo-oo-bah, he resided at a place called Eti-to, that two blacks named Poo-oo-bah, and Wayb lay-in, killed Mr. Cunningham, that he did not kill him, nor did he see him killed, he knew it not, but was told it—that it was men belonging to a distant part killed him—that he was at Poo-bah when he was killed, that it was about an enemy he was killed. His brother named Nee-koo-ha-lees held him in to go and bury the remains of Mr. C, two other blacks assisted him to bury the body. " The question was put, "who are part of him?" the reply was, "I did not see them, I did not see the
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killing of him." No further information could be obtained. We communicated partly freely by means of the interpreter, with whose frequent appearance he seemed acquainted, and partly from his conduct. The relations with which this block guided to the spot, where the relations were found, led, naturally to the conclusion that he must be a party concerned. The difficulty of understanding his broken English, added not a little to such suspicion; there being no evidence against him, he was not put on his trial, but remanded in custody at Great Yarmouth. The next year, but experienced that there is a "friend of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil," and by him for the punishment of evil deeds, he do also," were about now to receive the effect of clemency. His Excellency having the Governor having been informed that the state of ignorance, appointed an instrument, and committed their sentences, which having been explained to them, they were all liberated and accorded by their procuring Mr. Langhorne, to this place, with instructions from His Excellency to endeavour to re-establish them there, or near by residence. With much satisfaction I received them, heard them repeat theiracon, convinced them, that they should live in a large hut, being then erected for the use of the blacks, that they should have a piece of fish, should send their produce called to Sydney for their own benefit, that I would build a small house for them to navigate, instruct them daily, and the whole during the duration of the duty, return to their own district. Residence within, in Sydny, become so violent, that in the evening they left their clothes in the hut, during more, to their early lessons, every individual, had dispel a... I have since ascertained that they have returned to their district, as taking a wife with him on his way, and are still in dread of a vengeance. Thus the lamentable attempt of His Excellency to fix these men could not at this period be accomplished, and our hopes, as it very often the case in missionary journeys, too, for a season, disappointed. Yet, of the inhabitants which for the previous fruit of the earth, and has long patience for it, until they receive the former, and, the latter, rations, so, besides, must we endure.

b Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on High.

The peculiar habits of the Natives are certainly drawbacks to Missionary enterprise, and in their own civil and religious advancement; for, however much they may, and do, become fruitful to Europeans in telling employment, in our various Settlements, they remain attached in Christian principles, and become by such intercourse more indulgent in vice: the man receiving the wages of prostitution from those who procure, are fairly becoming, those to disease. When the Government distributed blankets to the blacks in this vicinity, there was only the proportion of twenty-five females to fifty-five males; and of those who had families, not one of the blacks with whose degrees did appear to have become so violent, that in the evening they left their clothes in the hut, in their early lessons, every individual, had dispel a... I have since ascertained that they have returned to their district, as taking a wife with him on his way, and are still in dread of a vengeance. Thus the lamentable attempt of His Excellency to fix these men could not at this period be accomplished, and our hopes, as it very often the case in missionary journeys, too, for a season, disappointed. Yet, of the inhabitants which for the previous fruit of the earth, and has long patience for it, until they receive the former, and, the latter, rations, so, besides, must we endure.

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put it press this year, at an expense of 25 L. Od. for the printing thereof, but the difficulty is
present in the present state of art. Besides the two already mentioned. Little M'Gill, while reading
one of the lessons in the Spelling Book, in which I was assisting to him, and explaining the
truth, that "He who made all things is God," observed, that old M'Gill knew it, for he had seen
John 1: 1. Enquiring further into this extraordinary assertion from a black, he said he would bring
M'Gill to inform him all about the circumstances. M'Gill came, and related to me as follows——
The night before last, when coming hither, I slept on the other side of the Lake. I dreamed that I and
my party of blacks were up in the Heaven; that we stood on a cloud; I looked round about in
the Heaven; I said to the men that were with me, there is He in the firmament, in the form
of a man, with clothing of fire, and with a face, His hands were stretched out like
the wings of a bird in the act of flying. He did not speak to us, but only looked earnestly at
us as he was flying past. I said to the blacks with me, let us go down, but he took us away; we
descended on the top of a very high mountain like this penult; (shewing me one that was in the
study,) we came to the bottom, and just as we reached the level ground, I awoke. We often dream
of this mountain, many blacks fancy themselves on the top when asleep.

My present employment is translating the Gospel of Mark, after which, I propose Matthew
and John, which with Luke already accomplished, will complete the New Testament, when they must
be compared and diligently revised, in which my oldest son will be able, if it please God, to assist
himself. The prophet knowledge he has acquired of the aboriginal language. He is again
attending to bring him into the design, a youth or two from the interior some hundred
miles distance, whilst he is now travelling, and which could not be accomplished hitherto. Should
it please God to influence the minds of one or two of the Aborigines, making them to become well
instructed in the Gospel of Christ, they would thus be valuable instruments to propagate the
truth as it is in Jesus, from tribe to tribe, amongst their own countrymen.

Thus, My Lord, I have stated to you for the information of His Excellency the Governor and
His Majesty's Government at Home, the occurrences and employments in this Aboriginal Mission
for the last twelve months. Pleased by the special Providence of God in this wilderness, amongst
white and black bosoms, but all exceedingly dry, our only hope is, that the spirit will breath in them
the breath of life, then shall "Peace be within our walls, and prosperity within our dwellings,"
and "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord.

I have the honor to address myself,

Your Lordship's obedient Servant,

I. B. Threlkeld.