

APPLICATION OF THE MORAVIAN SOCIETY OF UNITED BRETHREN FOR INDEMNITY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE INDIAN VILLAGE ON THE RIVER THAMES, BY THE AMERICAN ARMY.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE, FEBRUARY 18, 1814.

BETHLEHEM, February 10, 1814.

*To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, the memorial and petition of the undersigned, acting in behalf of the directors of the missionary concerns of the society of the United Brethren, commonly called Moravians, respectfully sheweth:*

That the protestant episcopal church of the Unitas Fratrum, or United Brethren, commonly known by the name of Moravians, derive their origin from the ancient episcopal church of the Unitas Fratrum, or United Brethren in Bohemia and Moravia, who, for three centuries and a half past, formed a society under that denomination. Having, during many years, been cruelly persecuted on account of their religious tenets, and their opposition to the prevailing errors in the church by the Roman Catholics, and being on the brink of extirpation, some of their descendants, in the beginning of the last century, emigrated from Moravia to Upper Lusatia, where, having been joined by people of different religious persuasions, they built Herrnhuth, the principal seat of the present society of the United Brethren. It may, perhaps, not be improper here to observe that our society, after the most rigorous scrutiny into their origin, doctrine, and discipline, has been recognised as an ancient protestant episcopal church by an act of the British Parliament in the year 1749.

The object of our society, as well as that of the old Bohemian and Moravian brethren, has, at all times, been, and still is, strictly to adhere to the doctrine of our dear Lord Jesus Christ and of his apostles, as laid down in the sacred records of our holy religion, and, not only by profession, but also by practice, to approve themselves the humble but faithful followers of our Divine Master, and it is not so much in the theoretical, as in the practical principles, that we differ from other protestant churches. This is evident from the single fact, that our society has embraced the confession delivered in 1530, by the friends of Luther to the diet at Augsburg, as their own confession of faith, and may be further proved by our constant declaration, that we consider all these who adopt the pure fountain of the oracles of the New Testament for the only source of their faith in this life, and of their hopes hereafter, as our brethren in Christ. We are distinguished from the Lutherans and other religious denominations by our church discipline, transmitted to us by the ancient church of the Unitas Fratrum in Bohemia and Moravia, and by our regular and uninterrupted episcopal succession from the remotest times of christianity, as from a publication, entitled "Acta Fratrum Unitatis, in Anglia, 1749," which I beg leave, herewith, to present to Congress for your library, relation being thereunto had, more fully and at large will appear. An exposition of our doctrine, as taught in our church, has been laid before the public, in a work entitled "Idea fidei Fratrum," of which the undersigned had the honor to present a copy to your honorable body some years ago; and an account of our constitution and church discipline has been published in the German language, entitled "Ratio Disciplinæ Unitatis Fratrum," of which a translation into the English language not yet having been made, a copy of the original work is herewith presented.

From a very small beginning our society has spread through the four quarters of the globe, in about twenty settlements in different European countries; one in Asia near Astracan, and nine in this country, where we live unintermixed with persons of other religious persuasions. Besides, we have settled societies in many places, as well in Europe as in this country, where the members of our church continue to live in company with their fellow-citizens of other denominations. In obedience to the express command of our Lord to his disciples to preach the gospel to every creature, we have, from the earliest times of the re-establishment of the Unitas Fratrum, exerted ourselves in behalf of those heathen nations who had never been favored with the glad tidings of our salvation, by the all-atoning death of our blessed Redeemer. It is now nearly eighty-two years when our society first began their missionary labors among the negroes in the West India islands, which have since been extended to Green-

