

Dänisch-Hallesche Mission

Propagation of the Gospel in the East

Propagation of the Gospel in the East: Being a Farther Account of the Success Of The Danish Missionaries, Sent to the East-Indies, For The Conversion Of The Heathens in Malabar

Böhm, Anton Wilhelm

London, 1714

The Fourth Question.

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urn:nbn:de:gbv:ha33-1-42477

ments. In the ordinary course of my reading *Malabar Books*, I have met with up and down several Histories relating to the former State and Condition of the *Indian Kings*, together with an Account of their Genealogie for the Space of some Thousand Years. At present there is no Sovereign King in all *East-India*, except in the Island of *Ceylon*, who is called *Kāndiarāsha*, and is altogether independent. The *Malabarians* have written many voluminous Books relating the Atchievements and warlike Exploits of former Kings, most of which I am like to purchase in time.

The Fourth Question :

In what Parts of India is the Malabarick Language spoken? Has it any relation to the Arabick, Persian, Mogol, or Sinesian Languages?

Answer : Eighteen different Languages are spoken among the *Malabarick Heathens*, of which the *Kerendum*, *Damul*, and *Wardagū*, are the Chief, being most frequently used in Conversation and Correspondence. The *Kerendum* is the ordinary Language of the *Bramanes*, and is esteemed among the Heathens, as the *Latin* is by the *Europeans*. The most vulgar Language is the *Damul*, or the common *Malabarick*, spoke in the compass of near *three Thousand two Hundred English Miles*, being almost known every where, and in many distant Kingdoms. Upon this Coast, the *Malabarick* is spoken in its greatest Purity and Perfection : So that *Malabarick Books* of all sorts are written in this Dialect.

Dialect. But at about *two Hundred* and *forty* Miles distance, farther up in the Country, we meet with another Dialect, and a different Pronunciation, much as there is between the *High-Dutch* and *Low-Dutch* in *Europe*. And as he who knows the *Low-Dutch*, can pretty well read and understand the *High-Dutch*; so the *Low-Malabarians* read in a manner nothing but what is composed in the high Dialect, which they understand very well.

As from the *High-German*, many other Languages are derived; so likewise from the *High-Malabarick*, divers other Languages do spring up, which a *Malabarian* can easily learn. And since the *Malabarick* Merchants, on account of their Seafaring Trade, make many Voyages far and near, there is hardly a Sea-Coast in all *India*, where this Language is not heard and spoken. Yet has it no manner of Affinity either with the *Arabick*, *Persian*, *Mogol*, or *Sinesian* Languages, but is a peculiar Language for it self, full of Gravity and Pathos: It touches the Ear very agreeably, particularly if a Man has a good knack of Delivery, and takes time to pronounce it with Deliberation. It is also very exact and copious, as the *German* or *Latin* are. Its Words are somewhat difficult to remember, and to pronounce; yet very easily to be learned by the help of Grammar-Rules. The reading Part, I think, is almost as difficult as the Reading of the *Hebrew*. During my three Years stay in this Country, I have hardly read any *German* or *Latin* Books, but have spent most of my time, from Morning till Night, in perusing *Malabarick* Compo-
sures.

fores. In this Language I do also discharge my Ministerial Labours, and converse by its means with such Heathens as are Natives of this Coast ; being now as readily versed in it as in my own vernacular Tongue. I have also for two Years together writ several Books in the same. (c)

(c) See Part III. of the Propagation of the Gospel in the East, pag. 47. Likewise the Letter writ by the Missionaries to the Reverend Mr. Lewis, pag. 27.

S E C T I O N II.

Containing Answers to such Questions as relate to Physick, Oeconomy, and the natural State of the Country.

The First Question :

HOW is it with the Air, Heat, Cold, Day, and Night ?

Answer : The Air is different, according to the different Seasons of the Year. In the Months of *August, September, and October*, we have the most temperate and healthiest Air, but it is subject to change almost every Day, blowing in the Forenoon from the Land, attended with some Heat ; and in the Afternoon from the Sea, refreshing every thing again.