

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 First Question.

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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.

gain. In *November*, *December*, and part of *January*, a westerly Wind reigneth, causing nothing but Rain, and very often stormy Weather, with a little Cold and Frost.

In the midst of *January* to the End of *April*, bloweth again a very temperate Wind: But from *May*, to the latter End of *July*, we are incommoded with a very strong, unhealthy, and hot Wind, blowing from the Land, which occasioneth various Diseases among the *Malabarians* as well as the *Europeans*. This Wind carrieth with it so violent and scorching a Heat, that one would think it came blowing out of a fiery Furnace. Looking upwards to the Sky, we can discern nothing but Sand, which the Wind drives in Heaps into the Houses: Walking in the Street, a Man can hardly open his Eyes, and he must wade through the Wind, as through a Stream of Water. During this obnoxious Wind, I am always very much indisposed, being brought by it to a meer Skeleton: I can hardly fetch my Breath, nor do I feel the least Perspiration of Sweat. Against this Inconveniency, I have this Year preserved my self very much, by the Help of some *European* Liquors, which I found my self obliged to use every Day.

Concerning the *Heat*, it is strongest in the Months of *February*, *March*, *April*, *May*, and *July*. The Dress of the *Malabarians* is so light and easie, that it does not incommode them at all. They are much given to washing, or bathing themselves in cold Water. They have always a sort of a Fan, wherewith they Air themselves: And to prevent the Sun's scorching them too much,

much, they lay a Cloth on the Crown of their Head plaited into many Folds. Besides this, they have on their High-ways, at every two or three *English* Miles Distance, a *resting Place*, or *Refectory*, wherein they may retire and cool themselves. During the greatest Heat, *viz*: from *Twelve* to *Two* a Clock, they use to sleep or sit down in the Shade.

As for the white *Europeans*, they are considerably more molested by this Heat, as wearing not only more Cloaths upon them, but adding also to this outward Heat, an inward one, by indulging themselves in all sorts of strong and hot Liquors. However, in their Houses they can guard themselves pretty well from an excessive Heat. When they sit or lay down, they have always cold Water sprinkled about them, and keep nothing on but some thin under Cloaths, whilst their Servants or Slaves do at the same time continually ventilate or fan the Air. When they go abroad, they have a *Somprair*, or *Ombrella*, swayed over their Head, to assuage the burning of the Sun. At Noon, from *Twelve* to *Two* a Clock, they conform to the Custom of the Land, and betake themselves to rest. Thus they do, at least in some measure, secure themselves from the consuming Heat.

As for my self, the greater the Heat is, the better I enjoy my Health; it agreeing so well with my Constitution, that I seldom as yet felt any Inconveniency by it: Nay, I should find it rather somewhat strange, if I should happen to return to *Europe* again in a cold, and chilly Winter.

Touching

Touching the Cold in this Country, 'tis such, that few have reason to complain of it: The *Europeans* especially enjoy their Health best whilst the rainy Season continueth, which beginneth the latter End of *October*, and lasteth to the Beginning of *January*. As the Rains in *Europe* are generally attended with a cool and refreshing Air, so are they here: But then does this cooling Air more pinch and pierce our Bodies here, than perhaps a sharp Winter-Season will do in *Europe*: The Reason whereof I suppose to be the violent Heat we commonly endure, before the cold or rainy Season breaketh in upon us; and which openeth the Pores of the Body to that Degree, that the cold Air succeeding that Heat, doth more sensibly touch us, than it would do, were the Pores kept closed, as they are in *Europe*. Hence it is, that we are very fond of a good warm Bed, and warm Cloaths, whilst the rainy Season continueth. We have, however, no need of Stoves, Ovens, or Chimneys, to warm our selves; it having never yet been so cold, as to make us stand in need of these or the like Means to get us a Heat. But our Nights, even in the warmest Season, are oftentimes so very cold, that at my rising in the Morning, I have now and then found my Feet very stiff; particularly when they happen'd to lie uncovered. Others again, when they awake in the Morning, are often quite shrunk together, and as it were half dead, having lain exposed to the open Air and uncovered. Yet after all, the cold Season is the most agreeable, and the most delightful Time of the Year, refreshing every thing,

thing, making it green and blooming, and yielding a most delicious Scent, as it doth in *Europe* in the Spring-time.

The *Malabarians* however complain only of the cold Season, as bringing the greatest Inconveniencies upon them; which cannot be otherwise, since they wear but a single thin Cloth, not thick enough to keep off the Cold, or to resist the Rain. And truly, if they did not ply their Work at such a time, to get themselves a Heat, they would be sadly pinched with Cold, as the idle Fellows use to be in *Europe* when it is very cold.

Days and Nights are here pretty near of an equal Length; but the Days are however somewhat shorter when the Sun is nearest to the Tropic of *Cancer*, or the Tropic of *Capricorn*, which however doth not long continue.

The Second Question :

What is their proper Diet? How do the Europeans Dress themselves? What Habitations and Houses have they? Is it expensive or cheap to live there?

Answer : The *Malabarians* live upon boiled Rice, with some Fish, Milk, or some green Herbs. This is their ordinary Diet, together with some *Betel Areck*, which serves them instead of sweet-Meats. The *Moors*, or *Mahometans*, feed besides this upon *Flesh*, *Fowls*, *Hares*, and all sorts of roasted and other delicate Meats. The great and wealthy among the *Moors*, entertain their Guests with a huge
Piece