

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 Sixth Question.

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Carpenters, Joiners, Potters, Goldsmiths, Brasiers, Ironmongers, &c. and some work in Chalk and Lime-Houses, in Brickilns, and Glafs-Houses, where Glafs-Bracelets are made.

There are Physicians, Surgeons, Barbers, Exchangers of Money, &c. I may truly say; the *Malabarians* are as expert and ready in their several Trades and Arts as any Nation in *Europe*, and are able to imitate almost every thing that cometh to their Hands, and relateth to their Profession.

Their *Women* maintain themselves by Spinning of Wool, grinding of Rice; by felling of Cheese, Milk, Butter and Fish; by baking Cakes, fetching and carrying of Water; by putting themselves out to Service, &c.

The Sixth Question.

Are strong Rains, Thunder, Hail, Snow, and Rain-bows, very common in India?

Answer: It often does not rain for *four* or *five* Months together, especially during the hot Season of the Year, that one must wonder how it is possible any Sprig or Grass can put forth under so long and consuming a Drought. And truly we should have but a sorry Crop, were it not for a great deal of Water which, in the dry Season, gushes forth out of the high Countries, and discharging it self upon the whole Coast of *Coromandel*, renders it green and fruitful. This Water undoubtedly floweth from some Countries where the Rainy-Season has been. As soon as it reacheth

eth our Coast, every Country-Man, whose Land it approacheth, turns it to his own Ground ; and after having thoroughly watered it, lets it pass on to his Neighbour. In this manner the whole Coast is overflown and refreshed with Water, till at last it emptieth it self into the Sea.

Whenever this Flood happens to be kept back for a whole Twelve-Month together, it causeth a great Scarcity of all Eatables : But when it comes, it comes with so abounding a Plenty, that it doth not only lay the Land under Water, but riseth about two Foot high above it, that one would think, it must either entirely rot, or at least stifle the Growth of the Seed. However, I have observed, that the Crop never appears more promising, than after it has been covered a while with this Water, which carries a very nourishing Virtue with it.

In the Months of *October* and *November*, we generally have Rains and Storms. *Thunder* and *Lightnings* are very common in *India* throughout the whole Year, and are observed to be far more violent than in *Europe*. There passeth seldom a Year, wherein Thunder or Lightning doth not do some Hurt or other. Had it not been for the merciful Providence of God, our whole Castle had been blown up last Year by the Thunder and Lightning, which falling next to the Magazine of Powder, exposed every thing to the greatest Danger.

As for *Snow*, there is none to be seen here : And the *Malabarians* do not know what to make of it when they hear of the Depth of

Snow in *Europe*, and of the *Water* froze into *Ice*. The Appearance of *Rain-Bows* happens very often, called by the *Malabarians*, *Indiravillu*. They pretend to know, that there is another *World* above us, wherein *Dewa Indiren* sways the *Sceptre*. When it *thunders*, they say, that this *King* is at *War* with his *Neighbours*, and that the *Rain-Bow* is his *Shooting-Bow*. But this is the *Opinion* of the *Vulgar* only, and of the ignorant sort of *People*, who take in *Things* upon trust, without any farther *Enquiry*. Their *Scholars* and *Naturalists* have a far better knack in *Reasoning*, and know very well what *Cause* to assign for these and the like *Contingencies* that happen in *Nature*.

The Seventh Question.

*What sort of Wood use they for Firing?
What Oil, or Tallow for their Candles?*

Answer : The *Europeans*, as well as *Malabarians*, use for their *Kitching-Fire* nothing but *dried Cow-dung*, made up in small round *Cakes*, called by the *Natives*, *Praten*. They have also some small *Wood*, which is daily carried about the *Streets* to be sold, but it is somewhat dear.

Concerning *Timber* for *Building*, 'tis imported from *Europe*, or from some other *Place* in *India*, and is consequently sold at a high *Rate*. A *Board* of a middling *Size*, is hardly sold under *five Dollars*; and a *Piece* of *Timber* for about *fifteen*. This obligeth them to build their *Houses* mostly of *Brick*.

Oil