

## 7. Sekundärliteratur

### **Memoirs of the life and correspondence of the reverend Christian Frederick Swartz. To which is prefixed a sketch of the history of christianity in ...**

**Pearson, Hugh**

**London, 1835**

#### INTRODUCTORY SKETCH.

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## INTRODUCTORY SKETCH.

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Extensive propagation of the Gospel during the first four centuries—Subsequent decline—Slumber of the middle ages—Maritime discoveries of the Portuguese—Syrian Christians—Armenian Christians—Roman Catholic Missions—Zeal of the Dutch—Danish Mission—Ziegenbalg and Grundler—Patronage of the Tranquebar Mission by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge—Schultz, and other Danish Missionaries—Establishment of a Mission at Madras—Introduction of Christianity into Tanjore—Mission at Cuddalore—Capture of Fort St. George by the French—Mr. Fabricius—Roman Catholic Churches and Mission Houses at Vepery and Cuddalore, granted to the Protestant Missionaries at the peace, in 1748—State of the Danish Mission previously to the arrival of Swartz—Recapitulation.

THE propagation of the gospel during the first four centuries after the Christian era, presents a most important and interesting subject of contemplation to every reflecting mind. A new and divine religion had revealed to mankind the knowledge of the will of God, the good tidings of a

A. D.  
400.



A. D.  
400.

Redeemer, and the promise of immortal life and happiness. Opposed as its spiritual principles and its moral precepts were to the prevailing philosophy, no less than to the multiplied superstitions and the corrupt passions of the Gentile world, the miraculous powers which distinguished the primitive ages of Christianity, and the piety and zeal of its early disciples, succeeded, under the guidance and blessing of its divine Author, in diffusing its influence with a rapidity, and to an extent, far exceeding that which has been witnessed at any subsequent period. It pervaded every province of the Roman empire, and even penetrated to regions beyond its widely-extended boundaries; and while it tended to ameliorate the character of polished nations, and to civilize the most barbarous people, it communicated to both blessings infinitely more valuable than any which refer merely to the transient interests of the present world.

The progress of the gospel during several succeeding centuries was slow and limited; while, in too many instances, the pure light of divine truth became gradually obscured, and in others utterly overwhelmed and extinguished, by error, superstition, and barbarism.

1000.

It was not till the tenth century, that Christianity made any effectual impression on the eastern and northern states of Europe, nor was



it before the commencement of the fifteenth, that it finally triumphed over Paganism in that quarter of the world. In the meantime, the conquests of the Turks and Tartars in Asia and Africa opposed an invincible barrier to the progress of the gospel in those continents; while the darkness and slumber of the middle ages paralysed the efforts of European Christians for its extension in any part of the globe.

A. D.  
1400.

The maritime discoveries of the Portuguese towards the close of the fifteenth century, by opening a new world to the nations of Europe, appeared to rouse their dormant energies in propagating the knowledge of Christianity. On the coast of Africa, in America and its islands, and in the islands and maritime provinces of Asia, the Spaniards and Portuguese, armed by the authority and stimulated by the zeal of the court of Rome, distinguished themselves in this sacred cause. The progress of the Reformation, by giving an effectual check to the ambition of the Roman pontiffs, and by depriving them of a considerable part of their spiritual dominion in Europe, might perhaps have tended to increase their ardour in the propagation of their religion in distant quarters of the world. Their efforts were powerfully seconded by the institution of the order of Jesuits in the year 1540; a certain number of that celebrated society having been, from

1490.



A. D. 1490. its commencement, devoted to the purpose of extending the pale of the Romish church in heathen nations.

1500. When the Portuguese, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, first established themselves on the coast of Malabar, they found a community of native Christians who welcomed their arrival, and were prepared to receive them as friends and brethren. These were the Syrian, or, as they have been generally called, after the Portuguese designation, the St. Thomè Christians; whose uniform tradition respecting their origin represents them as descended from the converts of the apostle St. Thomas in India, during the first century. The correctness of this tradition, notwithstanding some remarkable corroborations of its truth, has been generally doubted.<sup>1</sup> Certain, however, it is, from authentic ecclesiastical records, that a Christian church, episcopal in its constitution, and deriving a succession of bishops from the patriarchs of Babylon and Antioch, has existed on the coast, from Cape Comorin to Cranganore, and in the interior of Malabar, more than fifteen hundred years. Every circumstance relative to

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Heber and Archdeacon Robinson incline to favour the claim of the Syro-Malabaric church to this apostolic origin. "Journal," vol. ii. 278, and the "Last Days of Bishop Heber," p. 317, in which the arguments of Paulinus, from his "India Orientalis Christiana" in its support are abstracted. For the less ancient traditions, see Tillemont and La Croze.



the history of the Syrian Christians indicates their remote origin ; while their situation, surrounded by the darkness of Hindoo superstition and idolatry, in the midst of which they have, during so many ages, faithfully, though feebly, preserved the light of heavenly truth, renders them in a high degree interesting.

A. D.  
1500.

Such was the estimation in which they were held, and such the influence which they had obtained so early as the ninth century, doubtless from the general superiority of their moral character, that the native princes of Cochin and Travancore, in whose territory they were principally established, granted them various civil privileges, and their clergy ranked next to the Nairs, or nobles of the country. For a long period they enjoyed an independent government under their own native princes ; and even when, in process of time, they became again subject to a heathen sovereign, they continued to be governed in civil as well as ecclesiastical concerns by the bishop of Angamala.<sup>1</sup>

It cannot be a subject of surprise that corruptions, both in faith and practice, should in the course of ages have crept into this ancient church. We accordingly find that the opposite errors of Nestorius and Eutyches concerning the person and natures of our Lord, together with various superstitious ceremonies and irregular obser-

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, vol. viii. p. 347.



A. D.  
1500.

vances, have prevailed among them. At the period, however, when the fleets of Portugal first visited the shores of India, the St. Thomè Christians, though tainted with the Nestorian heresy, were entirely ignorant of the great western apostasy, knew nothing of the usurped supremacy of the Pope, and had never heard of the worship of the Virgin Mary, of transubstantiation, purgatory, or any of the peculiar errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome. A circumstance so fatal to the proud and exclusive pretensions of that See could not but excite the jealousy and alarm of its bigoted adherents. Hence it was, that no sooner had the Portuguese established themselves on the coast of Malabar, than the Romish clergy, and especially the Jesuits, who, with a zeal worthy of a purer faith, had flocked to make converts in this newly discovered territory, instead of embracing the Syrian Christians as brethren, and endeavouring by mild and benevolent methods to correct what might have been really erroneous in their creed, to improve their general character, and to protect them from the oppression of the neighbouring heathen princes under which they found them suffering, determined on compelling them to submit to the Papal jurisdiction, and to conform to the tenets and ritual of the Church of Rome. After a long series of intrigues, artifices, and persecutions, Menezes, archbishop of Goa, who presided at a synod convened in the year



1599 at Diamper, near Cochin, succeeded in persuading the Syro-Malabaric churches to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope, and to submit to the Romish jurisdiction. The archbishop, at the same time, expunged the alleged Nestorian errors from their liturgy, and with the bigotry and intolerance which characterized all his proceedings, committed to the flames the ecclesiastical books and ancient records of the Syrian church.

A. D.  
1599.

The triumph, however, of Menezes was partial and temporary. The churches in the interior yielded only a forced and apparent compliance with his decrees ; and about sixty years after the synod of Diamper, the conquest of Cochin by the Dutch, and the expulsion of the Portuguese from the greater part of the coast of Malabar, afforded them the opportunity of shaking off the Romish yoke, and of regaining their ancient ecclesiastical independence. This they have ever since maintained under a metropolitan bishop of their own nation, while the more numerous churches, chiefly on the coast, have continued their connexion with the Papal See ; and except that they have been permitted to retain the Syriac language in their liturgy, are in strict conformity with the Romish church. The numbers of these native Christians, comprising both the purer Syrian and the Syro-Roman churches, have been estimated at about two hundred thousand.

1659.



A. D.  
1659.

The independent part of the Syrian Christians, who possess about fifty churches among the hills of Malayala, having, upon their emancipation from the Portuguese dominion, acknowledged the jurisdiction of the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch, very naturally admitted the doctrine of that church, in direct opposition to their former Nestorian error. In either case, however, the tenet seems to have been little more than verbal. The Apostles' Creed was the only one recited in their service; nor did they, in fact, essentially differ from the Catholic doctrine respecting the divinity of the Son of God.

Upon the subject of the sacraments, and in their liturgical offices, they doubtless fell into many errors and superstitions; but considering their long seclusion from any more enlightened Christian community, the secession of the larger portion of their brethren to the Romish church, and the incessant persecutions to which they were exposed, the destruction of their books, and their consequent want of education, it is only wonderful that they have retained so much scriptural knowledge, and present so striking and favourable a contrast, not only to the heathens around them, but to the Roman Catholics, from whose power they have been so happily extricated.

Next in antiquity to the Syrian Christians are the members of the Armenian church, who, dispersed as they are throughout Asia, and engaged



in commercial pursuits, are to be found in every part of India. They differ in various respects both from the Greek and Latin church, and may in general be said to be free from essential error and corruption. They have places of worship at the three presidencies of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, as well as in the interior of the country, and are supplied with ministers from Persia, and occasionally visited by bishops and archdeacons, under the superintendence of the patriarch of Echmiatzin. The numbers of the Armenian Christians in India do not exceed a few thousands, nor have they ever appeared anxious to extend the pale of their communion.

A. D.  
1659.

The zeal of the Portuguese clergy, and of the various missionaries of the Romish church, among whom the justly celebrated Francis Xavier holds the most distinguished place, effected the conversion of thousands of the natives of India to the Roman Catholic faith. The greater number of these converts were at Goa, and Cranganore, and in other stations on the coast of Malabar, under the more immediate influence of the Portuguese government; but the missions in Madura and Mysore, in Marava and the Island of Ceylon, on the coast of Coromandel and in the Carnatic, were, if we may credit the reports, more particularly of the Jesuit missionaries, eminently and extensively successful. Many deductions must undoubtedly be made with respect to the numbers



A. D.  
1659.

of Hindoo converts thus asserted by the missionaries of the Romish church. But even admitting to whatever extent the success of their exertions, the Anti-Christian and unworthy methods to which the Jesuits had recourse, and the merely external and nominal profession of Christianity with which they were for the most part contented, tend to reduce to a very low scale the estimate of their labours, in what must otherwise be deemed a noble and most important enterprize.

The expedient resorted to by Robert di Nobili, chief of the Jesuits College at Madura, in the sixteenth century, and one of the most eminent followers of Xavier, of adopting, together with his clergy, the dress, habits, and manners of the brahmins, is a striking instance of those unwise and equivocal attempts to conciliate the Hindoos, by compromising the truth and simplicity of Christianity. This learned and zealous man, with the same well-intentioned, but mistaken policy, composed a work in Sanscrit, consisting of dialogues between a Christian and a Hindoo, in which, though the preponderance of argument is in favour of the Christian, the Hindoo, in order to convince his countrymen of the folly of idolatry, is made to reason powerfully in support of the principles of pure theism. A translation of this work having been transmitted from Pondicherry to the king's library at Paris, Voltaire, presuming it to be the genuine production of a Hindoo,



triumphantly appealed to it as a decisive proof, that it was unnecessary and superfluous to urge the doctrines of Christianity upon a people who were already so well informed as to the tenets of natural religion.

A. D.  
1659.

The failure of all such worldly expedients on the part of the Romish missionaries in India, is fairly acknowledged by the Abbé Dubois; who, however, strangely attributes it, not to the refusal of the divine blessing to a method of proceeding so contrary to apostolic principles and practice, but to the effect of the divine predestination!

The decline of the Portuguese dominion on the coast of Malabar, naturally diminished the influence and the success of the Roman Catholic missionaries in India; while the zeal of the Dutch, more especially in Ceylon, though liable in some measure to the objection which has been urged against the missions of the Church of Rome, as to the worldly policy and the culpable facility with which converts to their respective communions were too frequently encouraged, augmented to a very large amount the numbers of professed Christians in that island.

Though the piety and zeal of Protestants had often excited an anxious desire to propagate the pure and reformed faith of the gospel in heathen countries, its establishment and defence against the hostile attempts of Popish adversaries at home, together with the want of suitable oppor-



A. D.  
1659.      tunities and facilities for so great a work, combined during the first century after the Reformation, to prevent them from making any direct or vigorous efforts for this purpose. A regard to sound policy, as well as the sense of duty, had, as we have just seen, prompted the Dutch to accompany their conquests with laudable endeavours to promote Christianity in India; but it was reserved for the Danes to be entitled to the high honour of setting the first example of an institution for the express purpose of communicating to its native inhabitants that inestimable blessing.

The crown of Denmark had, since the year 1621, by the cession of the Rajah of Tanjore, been possessed of the town of Tranquebar, and a small adjoining territory, on the coast of Coromandel. The Jesuits had long before built a church there, but had done nothing towards the propagation of Christianity among the natives; while the Danish merchants, occupied only with the interests of commerce, were altogether indifferent to their religious condition. Such was the state of things when, at the commencement of the eighteenth century, Frederick IV., King of Denmark, on the suggestion of the Rev. Dr. Lutkens, one of his majesty's chaplains, who had proposed the subject to him when only prince regent, determined, notwithstanding the advice of some who thought the design premature and ill-timed, to



establish a mission for the conversion of the heathen at Tranquebar. With this view the king directed an application to be made to the celebrated Dr. Francke, professor of divinity in the University of Halle, in Saxony, whose well known devotion to the cause of religion, and recent establishment of the Oriental College of Divinity in that place, peculiarly qualified him for such a task; requesting him to recommend from among his pupils those whom he might deem best calculated, by their learning and piety, to lay the foundation of this important work. Dr. Francke made choice of Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, a young man of eminent talents and religious excellence, who had been educated at Halle under his own immediate superintendence, and who happening to be at Berlin when Dr. Lutkens was inquiring for suitable persons to be employed as missionaries, joyfully accepted the proposal. He was soon afterwards joined by his friend and fellow student, Henry Plutsch, who was actuated by a similar desire of engaging in the first Protestant mission to India. These pious men, having received holy orders from the bishop of Zealand, embarked at Copenhagen on the 29th of November, 1705, and after a pleasant voyage, arrived at Tranquebar on the 9th of July, 1706.

Here, notwithstanding their commission from the king of Denmark, the missionaries, instead of

A. D.  
1705.

1706.



A. D.  
1706.

being kindly received, were discouraged and opposed by the Danish authorities. Undismayed, however, by the various difficulties which surrounded them, and fortifying themselves by the study of the word of God, particularly of the Acts of the Apostles, and by prayer, these excellent men entered without delay on their arduous undertaking. Their first object was to acquire the knowledge of the Portuguese language, which, from its introduction two centuries before, was now generally understood by the natives, and then of the Tamul, the vernacular language of the country from Madras southward, and the greater part of the extremity of the peninsula, and of the north of Ceylon. Such was their zeal and diligence, that in the course of a few months they had acquired a sufficient knowledge of both languages, to enable them to catechise the native children in two schools which they had established, and which they supported out of their own slender funds.<sup>1</sup> Ziegenbalg particularly devoted himself to the study of the Tamul; and such was his extraordinary proficiency, that he not only acquired a very extensive acquaintance with the books written in that

<sup>1</sup> The account of the early labours of Ziegenbalg and his brethren of the Danish mission, particularly in the study of the Tamul language, by Niecamp and La Croze, is highly interesting and instructive.



language on Hindoo mythology and history, but soon began to converse fluently with the natives on moral and religious subjects.

A. D.  
1706.

The first fruits of his labours in this interesting field was the conversion of a young man of high caste, named Modaliapa, who, while assisting Ziegenbalg in acquiring the knowledge of Tamul, became gradually convinced of the errors of idolatry, and of the truth of the divine religion which he saw so admirably exemplified in him and his fellow-missionary. After much reflection and intercourse with these pious men, he at length delighted them by declaring that he was "willing to live and die with them; desiring nothing more than a bare maintenance in this world, if he might but partake of the blessings and promises of the gospel." When Dr. Buchanan visited Tranquebar, in 1806, precisely a century after this cheering event, he found in an apartment in Ziegenbalg's house the registers of the church, in which the name of this first heathen convert was inscribed.

The conversion of this young man, and of a native female of rank, appears to have excited considerable attention, and to have been reported to the Rajah of Tanjore, who sent an officer with assurances of friendship, and the offer of a guard to accompany them, if they should be disposed to travel into the interior of his territories. This,



A. D. however, they did not at that time think it expedient to accept.  
1706.

1707. In the month of May, 1707, the missionaries publicly baptized several of their catechumens in the Danish church at Tranquebar, on which interesting occasion Ziegenbalg preached in Tamul on the conversion of the heathen, and the best method of diffusing the knowledge of the gospel. A few days afterwards, they conferred on one of their converts the office of a catechist, to assist them in the instruction of his native countrymen ; and on the 14th of June, notwithstanding their slender means for such an undertaking, they commenced the building of a church for the use of the mission. Such was the blessing with which this pious design was attended, that with the assistance of those who were friendly, and even of some who were at first opposed to it, the building was completed in the month of August following, and consecrated in the presence of a large assembly both of Christians, heathens, and Mahomedans. This church was built of stone, and in the midst of the native population, a little out of the town. Here the missionaries regularly preached both in Portuguese and Tamul twice in every week ; and here, after baptizing some additional catechumens, and administering the holy communion, they laid the foundation of a numerous and flourishing church, composed of con-



verts well prepared and instructed in the principles of the gospel, and for the most part duly accrediting the sincerity of their Christian profession.

A. D.  
1707.

Being deeply convinced of the importance of early instruction, the missionaries lost no time in establishing a school for the education of such native Tamul children as they could collect for this purpose, some of whom they contrived to clothe and feed at their own expense. To this they shortly added a Portuguese school. The zeal and diligence of these devoted men were scarcely ever exceeded. In a letter from Ziegenbalg to Dr. Lutkens, he gives a striking sketch of his varied and laborious occupations during each day. Passing from his early devotions to the explanation of Luther's catechism in Portuguese, he proceeded to the study of Tamul, and then to conversation and reading with a native poet, for the purpose of perfecting himself in that language. After some short refreshment and repose, he catechised the children, then returned to the study of the Tamul, and afterwards joined in an exercise of piety with some German residents at Tranquebar. "All the evenings," he adds, "we converse with each other respecting our work, and the best means of advancing it. After supper, I review the business of the day, and examine my own heart, and conclude with singing and prayer."



A. D.  
1707.

Can it be surprising that a man thus piously and ardently engaged should be eminently successful, or that he should too soon be exhausted by such incessant exertions ?

Amidst the blessing of God which followed their various labours, the faith and patience of these pious missionaries were severely tried by the loss of two considerable remittances from Europe, by the shipwreck of the vessels on board of which the money had been embarked, and still more by the continued opposition of the European inhabitants. To such a height had this arisen, that at one period the excellent Ziegenbalg was even arrested by the Danish governor, and detained in prison for four months, during which his firmness and activity of mind were as conspicuous as his resignation to this unjust and disgraceful proceeding.

1709.

The disinterestedness and self-denial of the missionaries, combined with the assistance of some charitable individuals, enabled them to defray their increasing expenses until the month of July, 1709, when a most seasonable and important supply reached them from Europe by the arrival of three new missionaries, Messrs. Grundler, Bœving, and Jordan, bringing with them a considerable sum of money, together with a variety of stores for the use of the mission. The persecution which the missionaries had so long suffered



from the Danish residents was at the same time considerably checked by the authoritative interference of their royal patron, the King of Denmark, who sent out his positive commands to the governor of Tranquebar, to assist and encourage their pious labours to the utmost of his power.

A. D.  
1709.

It was in this year that the Danish mission became first known in England, by the translation of some letters from the missionaries, addressed to one of their friends in London. The attention of religious persons was powerfully excited by this interesting publication, particularly that of the Rev. Mr. Boehm, chaplain to Prince George of Denmark, one of the earliest members of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, which had been then a few years established. A present both of money and books was immediately sent by the Society to Tranquebar, and a brief but cordial notice of the mission was inserted in the report of its proceedings for that year. Such was the commencement of the disinterested and important patronage afforded to the Danish mission by that venerable Society; which, while it reflected the highest honour on its members, contributed so effectually to the extension and support of Christianity in India.

In 1710, Ziegenbalg undertook a journey to Madras, to ascertain what prospect there might

1710.



A. D.  
1710.

be of gaining access to the heathen, either by the way and in the neighbouring country, or in the town itself, with a view to their conversion to Christianity. The congregation at Tranquebar entreated him with tears not to quit them, or to return as soon as possible. At Chillumbrum, quitting the territory of Tanjore, he entered what were then the dominions of the Great Mogul, and proceeded to Porto Novo and Cuddalore, and from thence to Fort St. David's; and on the tenth day, having touched at St. Thomas's Mount, arrived at Madras in the evening. There he was kindly received by the Rev. Mr. Lewis, chaplain to the factory, with whom the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge were in correspondence on the subject of the Danish mission. During his stay at this place, Ziegenbalg made many inquiries respecting the religious wants of its inhabitants. "Madras," he writes, "is advantageously situated for spreading Christianity, if the English who command there would but second our endeavours, or join with us in propagating the gospel in the East. I found here a letter from Mr. Boehm, wherein he gives us some hope that the English might perhaps be prevailed on in time to concern themselves in so promising and worthy a design."

1711.

In the course of the three following years, independently of a considerable sum collected by a



general contribution<sup>1</sup> among its members, and transmitted to the missionaries, the Society printed, principally for their use, an edition of the Portuguese New Testament, and sent out to them a printing-press, a fount of Roman and Italic types, and a large quantity of paper for printing. The fate of the press was remarkable. The vessel in which it was embarked was captured by the French, and carried to the Brazils, where the printer who had charge of it died; but the press, which lay concealed in the hold of the vessel, having been re-purchased by the Society, was in the following spring safely landed at Madras. About the same time, the missionaries received from Germany a fount of Tamul characters. They afterwards succeeded in casting superior Tamul types at Tranquebar, and attempted the manufacture of paper, and were thus enabled to print a variety of books and tracts, which were eminently useful in the dissemination of Christian knowledge. Of these the most valuable and important was the translation of the New Testament into the Tamul language. Ziegenbalg had early conceived the design of this great undertaking, and commenced it in the year 1708, as soon as he had acquired a sufficient knowledge of the language to write it with correctness and elegance. His translation was completed in

A. D.  
1711.

<sup>1</sup> La Croze, tom. ii. liv. 7.



A. D.  
1714.

1711, but the printing of it was delayed, for the purpose of rendering it more perfect by the most careful revision, till the year 1714, when it issued from the press at Tranquebar. The Romish missionaries had printed various tracts in Tamul, but they were chiefly catechisms, the lives of saints, or other legendary tales of their church. After two hundred years, in which they had professed to preach the gospel, it was reserved to Ziegenbalg to be the first to translate the inspired record into one of the most prevalent languages of India. "May God Almighty," said he, addressing the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge on transmitting a copy of this translation, "prosper our labours by his heavenly blessing, and grant that his Holy Word, like an incorruptible seed, may be scattered among these nations, to preserve them from eternal destruction!"

The King of Denmark had, in the year 1711, granted to the missionaries at Tranquebar a pension of two thousand crowns, and in 1714 his majesty<sup>1</sup> founded a college at Copenhagen, for the purpose of superintending and supporting the interests of the mission. The number of converts now amounted nearly to three hundred, the

<sup>1</sup> An abstract of the King's instructions to the Missionary College is contained in the volume of letters from Ziegenbalg and Plutscho to their friends in Europe. They are highly creditable to the piety of that excellent monarch.



greater part of whom had been received into the church by baptism. The schools contained upwards of eighty children, who were nearly all supported as well as instructed by the missionaries; and the number of persons employed in the service of the mission, including school-masters, catechists, and others, exceeded twenty. This increasing charge, and the consequent labours and responsibility which resulted to the missionaries, together with the difficulties with which they had long struggled, induced Ziegenbalg to determine on a voyage to Europe, whither his friend Plutscho had already returned, for the purpose of more effectually promoting the important work in which he and his colleagues were engaged.

A. D.  
1714.

Having, therefore, consigned to the care of Grundler the concerns of the mission, and satisfactorily arranged their differences with the Danish governor, he embarked in the month of October, 1714, and was accompanied by a young native convert. With his assistance, Ziegenbalg occupied his time during the voyage in translating part of the Old Testament into the Tamul, and in composing a grammar of that language in Latin, which was printed at Halle, in 1716, and is still highly esteemed by Oriental scholars. On the 1st of June, 1715, Ziegenbalg arrived at Bergen, in Norway, from whence he repaired to



A. D.  
1715.

Stralsund, in Pomerania, for the purpose of presenting himself and his Hindoo companion to the King of Denmark, who was then personally engaged at the siege of that place. After a most gracious reception by that monarch, who conferred upon him the title of "Inspector of the Missions," he proceeded to Copenhagen, where he was most cordially welcomed, and made some arrangements with the Danish East India Company of considerable importance to the mission at Tranquebar. His next visit was to Professor Francke, at Halle, who took the liveliest interest in his labours, and who, both by his counsels and his contributions, was one of the principal supporters of his mission. While at that place, he married a lady to whom he had been long attached, and then pursued his course to England, where he landed towards the end of the year. Here he was received with the cordiality and respect to which he was so justly entitled. He had the honour of being presented to king George I., who made many inquiries respecting the mission, and assured him of his royal patronage. The Archbishop of Canterbury,<sup>1</sup> and the Bishop of London, treated him with the highest consideration and kindness. By the former of these prelates he was introduced to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and received a congratulatory address in Latin,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wake.



to which he returned an admirable reply in Tamil, immediately adding a translation of his speech into Latin. The Society made Ziegenbalg a liberal present both of money, paper, and books; and the Directors of the East India Company having generously given him a free passage on board one of their ships, he embarked at Deal on the 4th of March, and after rather a dangerous voyage, during which he improved his knowledge of the English language, landed at Madras on the 10th of August, 1716, where he was most hospitably received by the governor, and the Rev. Mr. Stevenson, Chaplain to that Presidency. This excellent person had much at heart the propagation of the gospel in India, and an admirable letter from him to the Secretary of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, dated in Dec. 1716, occurs in the Society's Reports, on the chief impediments to this important work, the reasons which induced him to hope for success in it, and the methods which he thought most likely to promote it. In this letter, Mr. Stevenson bears a most satisfactory testimony to the labours and the success of the missionaries at Tranquebar; and though much of his information is now familiar to those who have at all considered the subject, and some of his suggestions have been long since carried into effect, this sensible and pious address may still be read with interest and advantage.

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1715.

1716.



A. D.  
1716.

After a few days' refreshment at Madras, Ziegenbalg rejoined his excellent colleague, Grundler, at Tranquebar, and resumed with renewed vigour the arduous work of his mission. They immediately instituted a seminary for the education of native youths, to be employed as catechists and schoolmasters; and shortly afterwards, at the suggestion of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and with the assistance of Mr. Stevenson, and the approbation of the Governor of Madras, they established Tamul and Portuguese schools at Madras and Cuddalore.

1717. In the course of the following year, 1717, the church at Tranquebar having been much injured by an inundation, the missionaries built a second, and appropriated the old one to the instruction of catechumens and the burial of the dead. Ziegenbalg was incessantly occupied in the translation of the Bible into Tamul, in journeys to some of the neighbouring districts, and in religious discussions both with Hindoos and Mahomedans.

Amidst these labours he occasionally corresponded with the friends of the mission in Europe, and received from them the warmest assurances of approbation and support. Encouraged by the condescension of King George I., he addressed a letter to that monarch on the duty and expediency of diffusing the gospel in the British colonies in India. In reply to this communication, Ziegen-



balg received a letter from his royal patron, strongly expressive of his majesty's interest in the success of the sacred cause in which he was engaged.<sup>1</sup>

A. D.  
1717.

But the labours of Ziegenbalg were drawing rapidly to a close. In the autumn of the year 1718 the health of this indefatigable man began to fail. He languished for a few months amidst great weakness and pain; and with a faint hope of relief from travelling, he commenced a journey along the coast. Having reached Cuddalore, he found his end approaching, and sent for his friend Grundler, to whom on his arrival he expressed the most humble yet exalted hope of heavenly happiness; and having received the holy communion, and requested a favourite Lutheran hymn to be sung, he expired in perfect peace, on the 23rd of February, 1719, in the 36th year of his age, deeply lamented by his excellent colleague and the native converts, and esteemed and regretted even by the Pagans themselves.

1718.

1719.

The character of Ziegenbalg was indeed truly admirable. His exalted piety, and ardent zeal, were regulated by the soundest judgment, and tempered by dispositions and manners so kind

<sup>1</sup> This, and a subsequent letter from his majesty to the Danish missionaries, together with a truly apostolic letter from Archbishop Wake, were introduced by Dr. Buchanan in his Ecclesiastical Memoir, and in his Christian Researches.



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1719.

and amiable, that he attracted and conciliated all around him; while his unwearied activity, patience, and perseverance, enabled him to overcome difficulties which to many would have proved insuperable, and to establish his mission upon the most solid foundation. His translation of the New Testament into Tamul, is alone sufficient to immortalize his name; and has proved, as he fervently implored, when he commenced this great undertaking, a source of incalculable and endless blessings to succeeding generations in India.

The loss sustained by the death of Ziegenbalg was in some measure repaired by the arrival, in the month of September following, of three new missionaries, Messrs. Schultz, Dahl, and Keistenschmacher, who had embarked on board an English East Indiaman, after a short visit to this country, during which they experienced the usual kindness and munificence of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. Such an accession to the mission was peculiarly seasonable and critical, the health of Grundler having already suffered a severe shock, and being still extremely feeble and precarious. He exerted himself, however, with almost prophetic diligence and vigour in preparing his new colleagues for their various labours, as if anticipating the approaching conclusion of his own. This excellent man survived



his beloved friend Ziegenbalg little more than a year. He had projected a distant journey, for the purpose of preaching the gospel, and in prosecution of this design had even embarked for Cuddalore; but finding himself unable to proceed, he returned to Tranquebar, where his illness rapidly increased. On the 15th of March, 1720, Grundler performed his last public service, and three days afterwards resigned his pious spirit into the hands of his Redeemer, and was interred in the Mission Church, near the remains of his departed colleague.

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1719.

1720.

Schultz now became the superior of the Danish mission, and proved himself worthy of following his admirable predecessors. The severe losses which it had recently sustained, excited the hopes of its Roman Catholic adversaries in India that it must be abandoned, and awakened the apprehensions of many even of its European friends.

The piety and energy of Schultz and his fellow missionaries were, however, fully equal to this trying emergency. They laboured diligently in the acquisition of the native languages, in which they were soon able to catechize and preach; and instead of yielding to despondency, they enlarged the sphere of their labours. Aided by the liberal contributions of the governors of Madras and Fort St. David, and of other friends both in



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India and Europe, they increased the number of their schools, and of their publications from the press, and resumed the visits of their predecessors to the neighbouring towns and villages. Within five years from the death of Ziegenbalg, one hundred and fifty converts were added to the church.

1724.

In the year 1724, three additional missionaries, Messrs. Bosse, Pressier, and Walther, who had been selected by Professor Francke, and had sailed under the auspices of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, arrived at Tranquebar. They were charged with a letter to Mr. Schultz, from Archbishop Wake, in which the venerable primate, after expressing his satisfaction at this augmentation of the mission, recommended him to select from the native converts those who might appear to be the best qualified, and to associate them, in case of necessity, in his evangelical labours. Such was the ardour of the new missionaries in the study of the Portuguese and Tamul languages, which they had commenced during the voyage to India, that within three months after their arrival, they were able to enter upon their duties both as catechists and preachers.

Among the objects to which Schultz had directed his most earnest attention was the continuation of the translation of the Old Testament



into Tamul, which Ziegenbalg had conducted only as far as the book of Ruth. He commenced this arduous undertaking early in the year 1723, and regularly devoted to it six hours every day. Schultz was well acquainted with the original Hebrew, and consulted most of the European versions. He was assisted by a learned brahmin and other well-informed natives, and the translation underwent a careful revision by his colleagues. This important work was concluded in 1725, and the first part of it was immediately committed to the press. In 1727 the printing was completed, when the delight of presenting to the native converts the whole Bible in their own language, made him forget all the toil and pains which it had cost him; while, in common with every other labourer in this sacred service, he had been abundantly repaid during its progress by those copious communications of divine wisdom and strength, with which a more intimate acquaintance with the Word of God had enriched his mind.

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1724.

Having finished this great undertaking, early in the year 1726, Schultz, leaving to his colleagues the care of the mission at Tranquebar, determined on a visit to Madras, and embarked for Cuddalore, where he preached in German, Portuguese, and Tamul. Continuing his journey by land, he omitted no opportunity of instructing

1726.



A. D.  
1726. the natives in the towns and villages on his way, and arrived at Madras on the 8th of May. Here he was hospitably received by the English chaplain, and spent some months in zealous endeavours to promote the knowledge of the gospel in that city and its neighbourhood. Amongst other labours, Schultz re-established the school founded by Mr. Stevenson, which had been entirely abandoned, for the instruction of native children.

1727. At the commencement of the next year died the learned and pious Professor Francke, of Halle, who had contributed materially to the establishment of the Danish mission, and who, more than any other person in Europe, had laboured zealously and successfully in its support. On the death of this able and excellent man, the Mission College at Copenhagen requested his son, who succeeded him in the professorship at Halle, to continue the correspondence which his father had so beneficially carried on in behalf of the mission. About the same time, his majesty King George I. addressed a second most gracious and encouraging letter to the missionaries at Tranquebar, who also received a considerable present in money, together with paper for the printing of the Tamul translation of the Bible, from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

1728. In the year 1728, the same venerable Society, on the recommendation of Mr. Schultz, under-



took the sole patronage and support of a mission at Madras. With the assistance of the governor and council, a house was purchased in the Black Town for the use of the mission, of which Schultz took charge, and to which he immediately removed. There he preached constantly in the Tamul, Telinga, and Portuguese languages; and besides the superintendence of schools and other zealous labours, translated parts of the Bible, together with various tracts on religion, into Telinga and Hindostanee. The jealousy of the Roman Catholic priests, no less than of some native teachers, as in other places, excited considerable opposition, in some instances leading to open violence, against Schultz himself, as well as some of the Madras converts; but they were protected by the governor, their numbers gradually increased, and under the blessing of God the new mission prospered.

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1728.

In the mean time, an opening had been providentially afforded for the introduction of Christianity into the kingdom of Tanjore, by means of a subaltern officer in the service of the rajah of that country, named Rajanaiken. This young man, whose father and grandfather were Roman Catholics, had been baptized in that church; and being ardently desirous of religious knowledge, he had learned to read when he was about twenty-two years of age. From the Roman Catholic



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legends, and from the priests themselves, he derived little or no satisfaction; but happening to visit a pandaram<sup>1</sup> of his acquaintance, who possessed a copy of Ziegenbalg's Tamul translation of the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, he was so delighted with the discovery, that he read it night and day, and transcribed a considerable part of the volume before he found that he might be permitted to retain it. About two years afterwards, having been sent on military duty to the neighbourhood of Tranquebar, he met with an address of the missionaries to the natives, which induced him first to open a correspondence with them, and then to visit them. In consequence of the instruction which he thus received, Rajanaiken became convinced of the errors of Popery, and cordially embraced the reformed doctrines; and such was the zeal of the new convert, that he immediately began to instruct his countrymen, both Pagan and Roman Catholic. The first fruits of his labours were three of his own soldiers, who were in the course of that year baptized at Tranquebar.

The example of Rajanaiken was soon followed by that of others. Surappen, a native who had been converted to the Roman Catholic faith, and was at that time employed as a catechist, perceiving the errors of the Romish church, sent his

<sup>1</sup> A Hindoo devotee.



son Sattianaden to Tranquebar, to be instructed in the purer principles of the gospel. Surappen was in the mean time actively engaged, notwithstanding the opposition of the Roman Catholic missionaries, in making proselytes to the Protestant faith. A few months afterwards Sattianaden conducted more than fifteen converts to be baptized at Tranquebar; and having offered his services in the propagation of the gospel, the missionaries established him as a catechist in the kingdom of Tanjore.<sup>1</sup> Though no undue means were resorted to by the Danish missionaries or their catechists, in the exercise of their Christian ministry, the jealousy of the Roman Catholics was so much excited by their progress, that they persecuted the father of Sattianaden till they compelled him to return to the communion of their church, and even refused the rites of sepulture to his grandmother, though she died in the Roman Catholic faith.

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1728.

Rajanaiken was also exposed to their persecutions. He was now in the service of the prince of Marava, and being confirmed in his attachment to Christianity by frequent visits to Tranquebar, he was unwearied in his endeavours to communicate it to his companions. He succeeded in convincing several who had embraced the Roman Catholic doctrines of their errors, and amongst

<sup>1</sup> Niecamp, vol. ii. p. 197.



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1728.

others two inferior officers. The Popish catechists attempted in vain to regain them to their church. In a discussion upon religion, Rajanaiken supported his sentiments by such forcible appeals to the holy Scriptures, that his adversaries were unable to reply to them. He then, together with his two friends, determined on quitting the military service, and, though at the sacrifice of his worldly interest, embraced that of the mission. The Roman Catholic priests became, in consequence, more bitter than ever in their persecution of the Protestant converts, circulated the most calumnious accusations against Luther and the reformed doctrine, and even excited their followers to various acts of personal violence against Rajanaiken and his family. Their opposition, however, not only failed in checking the progress of the mission, but even tended to promote its success. Numbers both of Pagans and Mahomedans, as well as Roman Catholic Christians, resorted to Tranquebar for instruction; the access to the kingdom of Tanjore, which had been closed against Ziegenbalg, was effectually opened, and a journey shortly afterwards undertaken by Mr. Pressier into that country was attended by the happiest effects. At the same time, Mr. Schultz and Messrs. Walther and Bosse preached with success along the coast of Coromandel.



In the course of the following year died Malejappen, the schoolmaster who had accompanied Ziegenbalg to Europe. He was an excellent translator, and much attached to the interests of the mission. Several other natives, who died about the same period, gave the most satisfactory evidences of their faith in the gospel.

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1729.

The progress of the missions, both at Tranquebar and Madras, now requiring additional help, two new missionaries, Messrs. Worm and Reichsteig, were appointed to the former, and a third, Mr. Sartorius, was taken under the immediate patronage of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge for the service of the latter station. They arrived at Madras in August, 1730, and were received by Mr. Schultz with cordial delight and joy. Messrs. Worm and Reichsteig, after a stay of three weeks, pursued their journey to Tranquebar; Mr. Sartorius remained at Madras, and applied with such diligence to the study both of the Portuguese and Tamul, that he soon acquired a facility in speaking those languages, and was able to converse with the natives of the neighbouring villages.

1730.

The Madras mission, which had been supported by the late governor, Macrae, was equally favoured by the protection of his successor, Mr. Pitt; and towards the end of the year 1731, Mr. Schultz received a most encouraging letter from

1731.



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1731.

the Archbishop of Canterbury, accompanied by a present of four hundred and twenty pagodas, which enabled him to repay a sum which he had borrowed, and to establish a second school for native children. In acknowledging this liberal donation, Schultz took occasion to solicit of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge still further assistance in the work of the mission. Mr. John Ernest Giesler, of Halle, was in consequence recommended to the Society, and together with Mr. Cnoll, who was appointed to act as physician to the mission, embarked at Deal in July, 1732, and safely reached Madras.

1732.

Thus strengthened, the missionaries at that presidency proceeded with fresh vigour in their various labours, and the blessing of God evidently accompanied them. Amongst others, in conjunction with their brethren at Tranquebar, they visited Mr. Engelbert, the chaplain at Negapatam, and assisted him in his zealous endeavours to promote Christianity in the Dutch settlements on that coast. In these attempts Mr. Worm was particularly distinguished by the ability with which he conversed with the natives, convinced them of their errors, and conciliated their confidence, and in many instances he was successful in persuading them to embrace the gospel.<sup>1</sup>

The missionaries having long derived essential

<sup>1</sup> Niecamp, vol. iii. p. 33—35.



assistance from the labours of the native catechists, and the numbers of converts in the neighbouring districts being now very considerable, deemed it highly expedient to provide for the discharge of the higher functions of the ministry by one of their own countrymen. For this important purpose they selected one of the catechists named Aaron, a man of respectable family, who had been baptized by Ziegenbalg, and who had for many years been distinguished both by his personal piety and by his talents and usefulness as a teacher. At the close of the year 1733, the missionaries from Madras united with their brethren at Tranquebar and the chaplains of the Danish factory, in ordaining him to the work of the ministry, according to the rites of the Lutheran church. He was at this time about thirty-five years of age, and his long white pastoral robe, like that of the Syrian clergy, corresponded with the mild and amiable character of his appearance and manner. The mother and sister of Aaron had also embraced Christianity. The duty of the new minister was to preach and administer the sacraments alternately in a district of Tanjore, comprising several congregations of Christians; and such was the success with which he laboured, that in the course of the following year he had been the instrument of converting no less than fifty of his countrymen to the faith of

A. D.  
1732.

1733.



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1733.

the gospel. The services of the catechists, particularly of Rajanaiken, had been at the same time eminently beneficial.

The translation of the Bible into the Hindostanee language, which had been completed in 1732 by the learning and diligence of Mr. Schultz, though not printed till some years afterwards, was a work from which the missionaries anticipated much advantage in their labours in that quarter.

1734.

Mr. Sartorius having, in his late journey to Tranquebar, spent some days at Fort St. David, the governor expressed his readiness to assist in forming a mission in that neighbourhood. On communicating this intelligence to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, Mr. Schultz was directed in the next despatch to take measures for that purpose. That zealous missionary having at the same time reported the want of adequate accommodation for preaching the Word of God in the only house then occupied by the mission at Madras, the Society immediately obtained the consent of the Court of Directors to build a church and two schools at that presidency, under the superintendence of the governor of Fort St. George and the agents of the Society. Instructions were accordingly sent to their correspondents to commence those buildings, in the hope that though their present remittances would



not be sufficient for so considerable a work, the providence of God would enable them to complete it the following year.<sup>1</sup>

A.D.  
1734.

The attention of the missionaries at Tranquebar was in the year 1735 directed to the practicability of extending their Christian labours to Bengal, and they had written to request the assistance of their friends in England in carrying this design into execution, and had received their cordial acquiescence, when it was painfully interrupted by the premature loss of two of their number, Messrs. Reichsteig and Worm. These excellent men had been companions on the voyage to India, and had during nearly five years been zealous and indefatigable in the discharge of the laborious and self-denying duties of the mission. They died at Tranquebar within three weeks of each other, leaving a very powerful testimony to the truth and value of the principles and promises of the gospel. Mr. Worm, who had been a pupil of the celebrated Buddæus, professor of divinity at Jena, was a man of superior talents and acquirements, and admirably qualified to promote the cause of Christianity in India. His loss was therefore severely felt by his colleagues; but amidst the regret of being thus early called from the service of his Lord upon earth, and of being separated from an affectionate wife and an infant

1735.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.



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1735. daughter, he expressed in striking terms the peace which he enjoyed, and his lively hope of future happiness. His widow and child, however, survived him only a few weeks.<sup>1</sup>

Among the literary labours of the missionaries at this period, besides the printing of the Portuguese Bible, were a grammar in Tamul and German, and a History of the Church, composed by Mr. Walther in Tamul, and printed in 1735. The latter work was occasioned by a request of the catechist Rajanaiken, to be informed as to the origin and progress of the errors of the Church of Rome, in order that he might be better prepared to reply to the objections, and to refute the false opinions of the Roman Catholics. This ecclesiastical history, which overturned the pretended antiquity of the Romish Church, and which was extremely useful to the country catechists, was particularly designed for the instruction of the pupils of the seminary, who were to be educated as catechists and schoolmasters. About the same time, Mr. Sartorius completed the Tamul Dictionary which had been commenced by Ziegenbalg.

1736. The presents sent to the missionaries at Tranquebar and Madras, from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, amounted, in the year 1736, to no less a sum than £1,500, and in

<sup>1</sup> Niecamp, vol. iii. p. 124.



the following year, to £1,700 sterling; while the collections in Germany, Denmark, and Sweden, on several occasions, exceeded three thousand crowns. The zeal and liberality of professor Francke, of Halle, in promoting these subscriptions, are frequently mentioned in their reports.

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1736.

The mission which the governor of Fort St. George had promised to support, was in the year 1737 established by Messrs. Sartorius and Giesler, at the neighbouring town of Cuddalore. The missionaries had often preached there; and though at first the native inhabitants were indisposed to hear them, great numbers were in process of time persuaded to embrace the gospel. This branch, however, of the Madras mission did not long enjoy the benefit of Mr. Sartorius' labours. That active and valuable missionary died the next year, and was buried at Cuddalore; all the English gentlemen there attending his funeral. His loss was particularly felt, on account of his remarkable skill in the Tamul language; the most learned natives acknowledging that he spoke it like a brahmin. The death of Mr. Sartorius was followed by that of Mr. Pressier, at Tranquebar, after twelve years of faithful and effective service in that mission. The loss, however, of these pious men was happily repaired, by the arrival of three new missionaries, viz. Mr. Wiedebrœck, and Messrs. Obuch and Kolhoff, who

1737.

1738.



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1739,

had studied for some years at Halle. The mission was farther strengthened, by the embarkation, in the year 1739, of Mr. Kiernander, who had been a teacher in the Orphan House, and was recommended by Professor Francke to succeed Mr. Sartorius in the mission of Cuddalore. He was accompanied by Messrs. Fabricius and Zegler, from the Royal Mission College at Copenhagen, whose immediate destination was to Tranquebar. By the ship in which these missionaries sailed, thirteen chests, valued at £1,500, including, besides books, and printing and other paper, foreign silver for the use of the mission, were sent as usual, free of freight, by the kindness of the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

1740.

In the year 1740, Mr. Schultz, in addition to the preparation of some native youths for the service of the mission, as catechists and schoolmasters, accomplished the important point of commencing a Tamul school for the children of heathen parents, under a Christian schoolmaster. He began with eight boys, sons of merchants and tradesmen at Cuddalore, and indulged the hope that this measure would not only lead to a more intimate acquaintance with the inhabitants, but, by the blessing of God, tend to the introduction of Christianity among the natives. In this year the missionaries and catechists at Tranque-



bar were remarkably favoured by the numbers added to their congregations. They also nearly completed their new school buildings ; while at Cuddalore the mission under the care of Mr. Giesler was gradually prospering.

A. D.  
1740.

With the approbation of the Mission College at Copenhagen, they, at the close of the year, ordained the catechist Diego, who had long been most diligently and faithfully engaged in that humble but useful employment, to assist the native preacher, Aaron, who was now become infirm, and unable to perform his ministerial duties to a large congregation.<sup>1</sup>

The general cause of the mission sustained a great loss in the year 1742, by the return to Europe of Mr. Schultz, in consequence of ill health, after more than twenty-years' residence in India. By this event the mission at Madras was deprived of a labourer of great learning, piety, and zeal, whose services from its establishment had been peculiarly valuable, and who marked his own attachment to its interests, by generously presenting the house in which he resided for the use of the mission. His place was immediately supplied by Mr. Fabricius, who entered upon the arduous duties of that station with that deep humility and dependence on the providence and grace of God,

1742.

<sup>1</sup> Reports of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.



A. D. 1742. which formed the best security for the success of his labours.

The enlargement of their missions had now for some time pressed heavily on the funds of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; and they even began to fear that they should not be able to meet its increasing expenditure. They were, however, encouraged by "a most friendly and Christian letter from professor Francke, full of good-will towards the missions at Madras and Cuddalore," and remitting £250 towards their support. Animated by this seasonable aid, they requested that excellent man to provide two additional missionaries for those stations, trusting, as they piously declared,<sup>1</sup> "that the same wise and good providence of God which had hitherto blessed them in all their undertakings to spread the pure gospel of his Son Christ Jesus in all parts of the world, would raise up benefactors to contribute whatever might be wanted towards it." Accordingly, in the following year professor Francke sent out, at his own charge, the Rev. Messrs. Breithaupt and Klein, to Tranquebar; and out of his affectionate regard to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, he remitted a further sum of £300 towards the support of the two missions at Madras and Cuddalore. Two years afterwards, the same liberal and zealous

<sup>1</sup> Reports of the Society.



benefactor sent an additional donation of £200; on which occasion the Society expressed its earnest wishes for the general diffusion of the truly Christian spirit which animated that distinguished friend to the cause of missions.

A. D.  
1743.

The annual reports of the Society at this period contain many gratifying statements of the successful labours of the missionaries. The two native preachers, Aaron and Diego, in their travels through the villages of the district which had been assigned to them, were eminently useful; and so numerous were their converts in some of them, that it became necessary, according to the custom of the country, to appoint a Christian warden or superintendent over them. The former of these pious men finished his course in June 1745, after eleven years of diligent service as an itinerant pastor and teacher, having, during that period, been the means of converting many hundred souls. His end appears to have been hastened by his journeyings and fatigues; and such was his amiable character, and his holy and exemplary conduct, that he was almost equally lamented by the missionaries and by his native countrymen.

1745.

The death of Mr. Obuch, one of the missionaries at Tranquebar, followed shortly after that of the pastor Aaron. He was, according to the testimony of his colleagues, a most faithful and



A. D. affectionate brother, conscientious in the discharge of his duty, and persevering in it even to the disregard of life, so that he might fulfil the ministry which he had received, and finish his course with joy.

1745.

1746. The war between France and England, which commenced in 1744, having extended to India, in September 1746 a French fleet appeared off Madras; and having landed a body of troops, after a bombardment of five days, Fort St. George was compelled to capitulate. The French commander at first promised to protect the mission; but soon afterwards, having ordered a great part of the Black, or native Town, to be levelled with the ground, for the purpose of improving the defence of Madras, the Mission House was destroyed, and the church converted into a magazine. Upon this unexpected calamity, Mr. Fabricius retired with the children of the mission school to Pulicat, a Dutch settlement in the neighbourhood, where the governor gave them a kind and hospitable reception. Here, with the assistance of a catechist and two schoolmasters, he took charge not only of the Christians who were with him, but of the converts near Madras, constantly visiting the villages around him to disseminate the principles of the gospel. On the restoration of peace in 1748, Mr. Fabricius returned to Madras, and through

1748.



the good offices of Admiral Boscawen, the English mission, after some delay, obtained possession of a spacious church at Vepery near the town, with the houses and gardens attached to it, which had belonged to the Roman Catholic missionaries, but from which they had been expelled, on account of their treasonable communications with the French during the war. It is due to the memory of Mr. Fabricius, to notice his zeal and charity during this critical period, in abating nearly one third of his salary, and living himself in the simplest manner, carrying the fruits of his self-denying economy to the account of the mission fund. The Romish church at Cuddalore was at the same time transferred by the governor of Fort St. David to Mr. Kiernander, by the name of Christ's Church, for the use of the missionaries of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and as a place of public worship for the increase of the Protestant religion.

A. D.  
1749.

Having thus reviewed the origin and progress of the missions at Tranquebar and Madras, up to the year in which the venerable subject of the following Memoirs embarked for India, a brief recapitulation of the actual state of the missions at that period, and of the success which had attended their various labours, may properly close this preliminary sketch.



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1750.

It appears by the returns regularly made to the Mission College at Copenhagen, and to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, that from the arrival of Ziegenbalg in 1706, to the year 1750, the numbers of the converts at Tranquebar, and in the towns and villages of the neighbouring districts, to which the missionaries and their catechists and teachers had access, amounted to nearly eight thousand; and that from the year 1728 to the same period, the converts at Madras and Cuddalore, and along the coast of Coromandel, might be estimated at more than one thousand. Of these a very small proportion were proselytes from the Roman Catholic faith; though such is the general ignorance of the converts from heathenism by the missionaries of that church, that, with the exception of a few unmeaning forms, they could scarcely be considered as differing from their pagan countrymen. A few instances occurred of conversion from the Mahomedans, but their well-known prejudice and bigotry rendered these extremely rare. The great majority of the Protestant converts were native Hindoos or their children, chiefly, as might be expected, though by no means exclusively, even at that period, of the lower castes of the inhabitants.

It is not intended to be asserted that all these converts were well-informed and consistent Christians; but one of the principal features in the



history of these Protestant missions is, the unwearied diligence and the scrupulous care and conscientious fidelity, with which the missionaries and other teachers laboured to prepare their catechumens for baptism, and to instruct their congregations in the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, and the primitive discipline which they exercised over them. Their periodical reports afford many unquestionable proofs and most interesting memorials of the faith and piety of their converts, many examples of christian virtue, and many instances of opposition and persecution, "for righteousness' sake," sustained with a steadfastness, meekness, and patience, well worthy of the purest ages of the church, the genuineness and authenticity of which cannot fairly be doubted. Many a death-bed scene also is recorded in these reports,<sup>1</sup> in which the dying Hindoo, and not unfrequently the *female* convert, expressed with intelligence, humility, and ardent gratitude, the heartfelt penitence, the holy dispositions, and the heavenly hopes of the true Christian. Even where the instructions and exhortations of the missionaries failed of producing any effectual change of religious profession, there was

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<sup>1</sup> Upon all these points the original acts of the Danish mission in German, or the admirable abridgment of them by Niecamp, either in Latin in two volumes quarto, or in the French translation of M. Gaudard, with a preface by professor Francke, may be advantageously consulted.



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often a strong conviction on the native mind of the folly of idolatry, and the truth of Christianity as a divine revelation ; and a very general impression was evident in its favour from the unwearied and disinterested labours, and the holy and exemplary lives of the christian teachers. Nor was this all. The dispersion of the various translations of the holy scriptures, and the distribution of numerous tracts and treatises, printed at the Tranquebar press, tended to disseminate christian knowledge and christian principles, far beyond the narrow limits of the Protestant missions and their immediate vicinity, and to prepare the way for that more extensive diffusion of the gospel in India, which we have happily lived to witness.

It was under a deep sense of the important effects already produced by these establishments, that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, when recording the grants from the governors of Madras and Fort St. David, of the Roman Catholic churches at Vepery and Cuddalore, added its anxious expectation, that the directors of the East India Company would be disposed voluntarily to take the Protestant missions under their more immediate protection and favour, and to show some special marks of encouragement to that zeal and fidelity which the missionaries had manifested, not only for the Protestant religion, but likewise for the interest and service of the



Company, particularly during the late war ; concluding with an earnest hope, that all of this church and nation would enlarge their contributions to this fund, till it became sufficient to maintain such a number of missionaries and schools as might, by the grace of God, once more spread throughout the East the gospel of Christ in its original simplicity and purity, reformed from all the corruptions and abominations of popery.

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These pious aspirations were, indeed, but faintly echoed by the feelings of the nation at large. Something may, doubtless, be attributed to the imperfect dissemination at that period of religious information, and still more to the little interest excited in behalf of the inhabitants of a country so distant, and comparatively so unknown, as India, at a time when the English possessions consisted of but little beyond a few commercial factories on its coasts. The Society, however, laudably persevered in its zealous endeavours to promote Christianity in the East ; and in the eminent missionary, whose elevated character and important labours are to be developed in the following pages, the providence of God raised up an instrument admirably qualified to carry on its benevolent designs, during the eventful period in which Great Britain was pursuing her triumphant career towards the vast empire which she now possesses in Oriental India.



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