

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

CHAPTER II.

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CHAPTER II.

Mr. Swartz enters on the Duties of a Missionary—His account of these in a Letter to a Friend—Careful preparation of Candidates for Baptism—Excursions to the Towns and Villages near Tranquebar—Specimens of Swartz's Conversations with the Natives—Letter to Dr. Struensee—Periodical Reports of the Danish Mission—Pious Custom of the Missionaries on proceeding upon a Journey—Visit of Messrs. Kohlhoff and Swartz to Cuddalore—Pastoral and weekly Conferences with their Brethren there—Return to Tranquebar.

No sooner had Mr. Swartz attained some knowledge of the native language, than he entered vigorously upon the discharge of the various duties of the Mission. Early in the year 1751, he commenced a daily catechetical exercise with the youngest children of the Tamul school, which consisted not merely in questioning them, and receiving their answers, but in explaining the principles of Christianity, in the order prescribed by the catechism, in the simplest manner, and in familiar dialogues by examples taken from common life. He also catechised the children of the Portuguese school alternately

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with Mr. Poltzenhagen, and preached in Portuguese alternately with him and Mr. Made-rup, another missionary, who had the superintendence of the Portuguese congregation. In addition to these stated occupations, Mr. Swartz held in this year two preparations for baptism with natives, and afterwards baptized many of the candidates. These, with other interesting particulars, are related with great simplicity and piety in his second letter from India, dated Sept. 28, 1751, and addressed to a clergyman at Halle, of which the following is an extract.

“The manifold kindness which you showed me in my university years, induces me to address a letter to you from this country ; the more so, as it was you who first gave me a hint that I should, perhaps, be asked to go to India. When I think of this, and of the first distant preparations made by the divine providence, I praise and humbly thank the only wise God. It is also a sweet comfort to my heart, that I am enabled to say, ‘It is thou, O my God, who hast conducted me to these parts ; I have not run hither of my own accord, but would rather have declined the call, if thy unseen hand had not retained me. O therefore help, and bestow upon me all necessary wisdom, grace, and strength, for this office !’

“My gracious God has already manifested so

many proofs of his paternal love towards me, that I cannot but remember the word of the Lord Jesus, which he spake to upright Nathanael, (John i. 50,) 'Thou shalt see greater things than these.' May the Lord give me grace, that, like Nathanael, I may use the proofs of divine goodness and mercy which I have hitherto experienced, as a solid foundation, strengthening, and confirmation of my faith. If henceforth I do not behold the glory of God, then verily unbelief will be the cause of it. At Nazareth, my Saviour did not many mighty works, because of their unbelief. Now, Lord, grant faith, and *that* lively faith!

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"But that you may know this from more special circumstances, and adore the name of the Lord with me, I shall mention some particulars. First, I humbly praise God that, during the year I have been here, he, notwithstanding all my imperfections, hath borne with me with great patience and forbearance, hath been daily nigh unto my soul, and hath kindly refreshed me. If I have not had the same enjoyments daily, the fault was on my own side. Now this goodness, long-suffering, and patience of our Lord, I shall account my salvation, according to St. Peter's exhortation.

"As to external things, God has given me life and health, and has made the climate and the heat supportable; so that, though my breathing

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was sometimes oppressive, yet I have not been induced to complain. Praised be his name also for his gracious help ! Whoever always reposes in the good and holy will of God, saves himself much trouble, and makes that supportable which an impatient and unsubdued self-will renders intolerable. May the Lord subdue this self-will more and more by the power of the cross of Christ !

“ Concerning the language of this country, I frequently thought during the voyage—‘ Behold, at Halle I learned Tamul three months, and I made but little progress ; how much time will be required to learn that language, even though it be only so much as to be able to express myself intelligibly !’ But God has graciously removed this difficulty, which appeared to me so great ; for after we had once preached, it became more and more easy.

“ Soon after the commencement of the new year, I began a catechetical hour in the Tamul, or Malabar School, with the youngest lambs ; and thus I learned to stammer with them. At the same time, I made almost daily excursions, and spoke with Christians and heathens, though, as may be easily conceived, poorly and falteringly. However, God helped me on from day to day.

“ After I had thus practised reading and speaking for nine months, I began the first preparation on the 26th of May, 1751, and finished it on the 2nd

of July, when I baptized most of the converts. Each of my brethren was occupied with preparing a small number for holy baptism. When, therefore, ten days afterwards, another party came, I began the second preparation on the 12th of July, and ended it in six weeks. With these souls I hope the Lord has not permitted me to labour in vain. How they now conduct themselves, I cannot say, as the far greater part of them were from the country.

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“The increase this year is very pleasing, consisting of four hundred in the Tamul congregation, including a hundred and fifty-nine children, partly of Christian, and partly of converted heathen, parents; though the real blessing does not amount to the whole of that number. God send forth faithful labourers, for the harvest is indeed great! Therefore help us, dear sir, to implore the divine assistance.

“This short account I have given you, in humble praise of our gracious God. To him alone belongeth glory, but to us shame; and if we should even suffer ignominy and disgrace for the sake of Jesus, we are unworthy of so great an honour.”

The preparation of candidates for baptism, mentioned in the preceding letter, was frequent

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at stated periods in every year. Several of the missionaries were occasionally employed with different parties of the natives at the same time, which was the case in the year 1751, in the course of which, twenty of these preparatory lectures and instructions took place. In general, the greater proportion of such labours devolved on the junior missionaries, as soon as they were sufficiently conversant with the native language, both for the purpose of rendering them familiar with this important employment, and of affording to the seniors more leisure for correspondence, and other laborious duties of the mission.

The utmost care was taken during these exercises to ascertain, not only the religious knowledge, but the Christian dispositions of the professed converts. Those who were slow of apprehension, or the sincerity of whose views in embracing Christianity appeared doubtful, were deferred to the next preparation. This occurred with respect to two candidates on one of the occasions just mentioned, of whom one was found to be deficient in knowledge, and the other of too worldly a mind to be admitted into the Christian church. The period of probation for baptism was sometimes extended to several months, that the missionaries might have a better opportunity of observing the moral character of the converts,

and with respect to those who came from distant places, of obtaining information as to their previous conduct.

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Agreeably to the practice of that comparatively early period, when there were seven or eight missionaries at Tranquebar, Mr. Swartz, as he informed his friend in the preceding letter, was accustomed to make excursions almost daily among both the Christians and the unconverted natives, generally in company with one of the elder brethren. Four or five missionaries occasionally went out, attended by one or both of the country priests, and each missionary followed by a catechist or an assistant, and some of the school-boys of the first class. They divided themselves, either singly or in parties of two, among the neighbouring towns and villages, conversing with the natives, endeavouring to convince them of their errors, and to persuade them to embrace the religion of the gospel. Various specimens will be given in these memoirs of the wisdom and ability, as well as the kindness, evinced by Mr. Swartz in such conversations. A few shall here be inserted, which may serve to show his early proficiency in the exercise of a talent peculiarly important to a missionary, and in which he afterwards so eminently excelled.

A Hindoo merchant said to him, "God has created us to the end that we should know and

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serve him." This Swartz confirmed, and then added with regret, that although God had given him and many of his countrymen a knowledge of the end of their creation, yet they remained in idolatry, and thus unhappily never attained it. He then declared the doctrine of Christ, and pointed Him out as the only way to the true and saving knowledge of God.

Another wealthy old merchant, who understood Danish, English, and French, said to him, "Sir, be not displeased; I wish to ask you a question. Do all Europeans speak like you?" Swartz replied, that all Europeans were not true Christians; but that there were many who were really so, and who sincerely prayed for the Hindoos, that they might become acquainted with Jesus Christ. "You astonish me," said he; "for, from what we daily observe and experience, we cannot but think Europeans, with but few exceptions, to be self-interested, incontinent, proud, full of illiberal contempt and prejudice against us Hindoos, and even against their own religion, especially the higher classes. So at least I have found it with the majority of those with whom I have had any intercourse."

This is a reproach which has been but too justly thrown upon Europeans by the unenlightened natives of India, and has ever formed one of the most powerful obstacles to their conversion

to Christianity. It is, however, a reproach which, though still too frequently deserved, has of late years been considerably removed by the improved character and conduct of our own countrymen; more particularly in stations of influence and authority. May it daily become less merited!

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Swartz one day met a Hindoo dancing-master, with his female pupil, and told them, that no unholy persons shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. "Alas, sir!" said the poor girl, "in that case hardly any European will ever enter it;" and passed on.

Having asked a Pandaram, or Hindoo devotee, who carried about an idol, why he did so; "For my support," said he. Swartz reproved him for his baseness, and inquired the name of his idol. He replied by a Tamul word, signifying, "He that removes evil." Upon this, the missionary spoke to him of Jesus, as the only Saviour who took away the sins of the world.

A Hindoo pretended that he and his countrymen worshipped the same God as the Christians did, only under other names. Swartz replied, "The true God must possess divine perfections; such as supreme wisdom, omniscience, omnipotence, holiness, justice. Now, nothing of this is found in your divinities; but, by your own records, ignorance, impurity, cruelty. How can it be said of such that they are gods? You have a proverb, that where sin is, there is no excel-

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lence. Now you acknowledge the practices ascribed to your gods to be sinful ; consequently, by your own confession, they are unworthy of the name." " That is very true," said the Hindoo ; " but if we receive even what is false, and think it to be true in our heart, it is done to us according to our faith." " How can you adopt," answered Swartz, " a sophism, which you yourselves, on other occasions, reject ? You are accustomed to say, ' If one write the word sugar, and then lick his finger, it will not on that account become sweet, though he believe it ever so firmly.' "

A native objected, " Show us any one who has embraced your religion, and has been actually saved, and we will believe you." Swartz answered, in the spirit of Abraham's reply in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, " God has given you his word—prove and examine it. Such an evidence as you require is not the appointed way of becoming convinced of the truth ; for the devil can transform himself into an angel of light."

Another observed, " I am surprised to hear you say, that if we forsake Paganism, our souls will be happy, and that if we do not, God will punish us. What is the soul ? A breath, which, when it has left the body, is blown away with other winds. You may perceive this by our holding the hand to a dying person's mouth, to feel whether there is yet breath. If there be, life is

still in him. Thus breath and the soul are one and the same thing. Who then can say that wind shall be punished? What is God? Can he be seen? He is the universe. I die:—that means nothing more than that my body is resolved into its original elements—water, fire, earth, air. But the existence of such a spirit within me as you speak of, I believe not. Where is it when I sleep, when I see no one, or though one touch me, I do not feel it?” Swartz replied to each point. He reminded the objector of the *operations* of the soul, such as thinking, judging, determining; and asked, whether wind was capable of these? whether he could not by this perceive that he had a soul, which is a real being, endowed with understanding and will, and which is therefore susceptible of sorrow, anxiety, and pain. He next explained the doctrine of the resurrection. This man expressed, without reserve, the doubts which other heathens entertain; from which it appears that the errors of Spinoza are not unknown in India. Indeed they are not new, having been long since noticed and refuted in Eccles. iii. 19—21, and in the book of Wisdom, ii. 1—3.

A heathen said to Swartz, “If I become a Christian, how shall I be maintained?” He replied, “Work and pray.” The Gospel of St. Matthew was given to him, and on his first opening it, he lighted on the passage, chap. vi. 31—33.

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“Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat, &c. for after all these things do the Gentiles seek : for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you.” This singular coincidence made a deep impression.

A Hindoo inquired whether there were any worldly advantages, such as money or rice, to be gained by embracing our religion. Swartz lamented his earthly mind, and informed him that the missionaries were not come to support the idle, but to show to all the way to obtain incorruptible blessings. Another said, “If I become a Christian, I shall be called an apostate, who has crept into another caste.” Swartz told him, that heathens and unbelievers belonged to the caste of the devil ; but that the family of God, into which those are adopted who believe the gospel, is “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood ; a peculiar people.” The following incidents afford a pleasing proof of the superior moral feeling of the converted Hindoo.

During an artificial scarcity, occasioned by the closing of the magazines of grain, a Christian woman said, “I have a Fanaam, but could get no rice to day ; I had no other food therefore than water ; but I have spiritual food which has comforted my heart.”

A Hindoo came with his wife to be instructed by the missionaries, being induced by the meekness and patience with which his mother, who was a believer, had endured their reproaches. On Mr. Swartz visiting her, she told him that she prayed night and day, and put her trust in God alone; that He provided her with work, and that she was well contented, if she could sometimes only gather a few herbs, as she was then doing, for her support.

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Another poor convert being exhorted not to care anxiously for the body, answered, "He that planted the tree, will he not water it? Whether he gives us life or death, we will not forsake him."

In the year 1752, Mr. Swartz conducted three numerous preparations for baptism, and continued his excursions among the neighbouring villages. No letters from him during this year are recorded in the missionary journals; and in general it may be observed, that he was averse to any extensive correspondence which might divert him from his studies and labours among the natives. From the moment that he rose in the morning, till he retired to rest, he was unremittingly employed.

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In the next year, however, a letter occurs to the Rev. Dr. Struensee, then professor of divinity at Halle, afterwards superintendent-general,

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CHAP. that is, bishop and metropolitan of the Duchy of
II. Sleswig, and father of the unfortunate Count
1753. Struensee, prime minister of Denmark, of which
the following is an extract. It is dated Oct. 8,
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“Concerning my poor labours, I usually employ myself in the morning with the school children; and when I am preparing a small party for baptism, that is also done in the forenoon. In the afternoon, Mondays excepted, I commonly go out to the villages, to visit the Christians in their cottages, and to converse with heathens.

“The enclosed annual report will exhibit to you the present external state of the mission. This year Satan, by his raging, endeavoured to excite the fears of the Christians, by which many heathens were no doubt deterred from embracing the gospel. For towards the end of April last, a dissension arose between the papists and heathens in Tanjore, on account of some usages. The Rajah having been informed of it, treated the Roman Catholics with great severity; upon which many of them renounced Christianity, both verbally and in writing. Since that time, the Romish Christians in the Tanjore country have been roughly handled: in which sufferings our Christians have also been made to share in several places, though not so severely as the papists in

Tanjore. May our faithful God arm us with grace, resolution, and strength !

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“ In July a captain of the Danish navy was sent as an envoy to Tanjore, on which occasion Mr. Wiedebröeck, at the captain’s earnest request, accompanied him, and had an opportunity of announcing the gospel of Christ, both in the country and in the residence itself, without hindrance. May God grant a permanent blessing upon it !”

The report alluded to by Mr. Swartz in the preceding letter, was a short account in German, on one quarto sheet printed on the 5th of October in every year at Tranquebar, comprising the number of native Christians belonging to the three congregations constituting the Danish mission, viz. the Portuguese, and the two Tamul for the town and the country, which last, previous to the establishment of the missions of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, was divided into five districts, named after their central places ; the district of Mahaburam, that of Tanjore, including the kingdom of Madura, that of Madhewipatnam, comprising the country of Marava, and that of Cumbagonam.¹

¹ The increase of each congregation, the missionaries, catechists, and assistants, the number of schools, schoolmasters, mistresses, and children, the printing press and its productions, the country priests and native teachers, with various other parti-

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It may here be proper to observe, that the brethren at Tranquebar, having soon discovered the extraordinary talents of Swartz, gave him the superintendence of all the Christian schools and churches south of the river Caveri.

At this period, whenever the missionaries proceeded on a journey, or returned from one, when they arrived at another missionary station, or departed from it, their first and last employment was to bend their knees in prayer to Almighty God with all their brethren. In this apostolical manner Messrs. Kohlhoff and Swartz, on the 18th of February 1754, set out on foot on a visit to Cuddalore. Two other missionaries accompanied them a few miles on their way, and united with them in prayer at parting. They supped and slept at the house of a Hindoo merchant, who civilly received their exhortations to himself and his family.

The persecution of Christians in Tanjore still continuing, these pious men encouraged themselves by reading in Hebrew, according to their general custom of studying the Holy Scriptures in the original languages, the 74th Psalm. After their morning devotions, first with each

culars, were also inserted in this statement. On the same day the missionaries wrote their annual reports to the king of Denmark, and to each branch of the royal family, which were transmitted directly to those illustrious personages.

other, and then with their servants and coolies, they proceeded on their journey, and delivered a lecture on the atonement at a place where several Christians were assembled, with a concluding address to the surrounding heathen. On the next day, they represented to the Brahmins and others, in front of a pagoda at Sembankudi, the absurdity and fatal consequences of idolatry, and in the evening reached Tirucottah, where they lodged at the commanding officer's, who was very kind to them, and accommodated them with a boat to carry them down the river and across the Coleroon, and afterwards a catamaran over another river, which saved them from passing through a desert and swampy forest. The boatmen refused to hear anything of Christianity; but stopping for refreshment in a wood, several Hindoos, and Mahomedans, and a Roman Catholic native, came round them, to whom they announced the only true God, and Jesus the only Mediator and Redeemer. A robber, one of whose feet had been struck off by the headsman of Chillumbrum, begged a plaister, which the missionaries gave him, with a direction to the only Physician of the soul for the healing of his spiritual wounds. The Romish Christian made himself known in private, but was admonished of the duty of openly confessing Christ before men; and when he urged the difficulty of doing this in India, he was reminded of

CHAP. our Lord's words, Matthew x. 32, 33. On their
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1754. way many were exhorted, and tracts were distributed. One man said, "We follow our rulers." "Then," replied the missionaries, "follow God. He is the Supreme Ruler of us all."

At the Porto Novo river, they were met by Mr. Hutteman, and by Mr. Vaneck, the Dutch superior, who took them to his house. On the 23rd, they travelled the whole way to Cuddalore along the sea shore. A merchant of high rank in his caste, but reduced in circumstances, followed them from Porto Novo, and offered to become a Christian; but his views appearing to be interested, he was admonished to be sincere. At noon they addressed some Hindoos at a choultry, particularly some Byragees, a caste of professed and importunate beggars, and pointed out to some fishermen, how they were entangled in the net of Satan, and by whom they might be rescued. Towards evening, Mr. Kiernander met them near Chetty-Cupam. Having strengthened each other in the Lord at the choultry, they proceeded up the river in a boat, and arrived safely at the mission house at Cuddalore. There they united in prayer to Almighty God, their reconciled Father in Christ, laid their own wants and the general distress, humbly yet confidently before him, and implored a blessing upon themselves, their brethren, and their work. They then visited the sick Portu-

guese schoolmaster, and conversed with the catechists, and several members of the congregation. A number of Christians having come from the country for the succeeding day's service, they explained to them the Lord's Prayer, and the form of general confession, by way of question and answer. They closed this busy day by visiting the school, and some of the mission servants.

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On the 24th, being Quinquagesima Sunday, Mr. Swartz preached in the morning in Tamul, on Luke xviii. 31, on the necessity of Christ's sufferings, and Mr. Kohlhoff in the afternoon in Portuguese, during which service, the morning sermon was repeated in the Tamul school.

The next day they conversed with the native Christians who were returning into the country; and exhorted them to "keep the word of God" which they had heard, and to walk worthy of it. They again visited the sick schoolmaster, and reminded him how necessary it was to be well assured of one's state, in order to be peaceful in death.

It had been usual from the commencement of the mission at Tranquebar, for the missionaries to hold, on Tuesday in every week, a pastoral conference on some passage of Scripture for mutual edification and encouragement. This pious custom, Messrs. Kohlhoff and Swartz did

CHAP. not omit during their present excursion, but from
II. ten to twelve on the 26th, held what they called
1754. a colloquium biblicum with their brethren at Cuddalore, on Acts x. 36, 37 ; taking occasion, from that animating passage, to exhort each other to courage and perseverance in the great work of "preaching peace" to the Gentiles by Jesus Christ. In the afternoon, they visited by water two villages of fishermen, situated to the east of Cuddalore, between the river and the sea, and observing that the hours struck at the mission church were distinctly heard on their island, they represented to them the duty of listening to the word of salvation, which the goodness of God had thus brought so near to them.

The next day, the two missionaries, accompanied by their brethren of Cuddalore, proceeded to a small neighbouring town, and sitting down in a choultry, conversed with the natives who collected round them, on the acknowledged earthly origin, and base and unworthy character of their pretended divinities, and urged the unprofitable nature of their idolatry, and the peace, purity, and immortal hope resulting from the faith of the gospel. Several succeeding days were thus occupied either in exhortations to the heathen, or to the native Christians, the catechists, the school-children, and their teachers.

Having, at the request of their brethren, consented to remain two days longer at Cuddalore, they assisted at the weekly conference, the object of which was thus stated by the founder of the mission, Ziegenbalg.

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“The weekly conference which we hold every Friday with all the labourers, is of the greatest utility in keeping the mission work in order. For on that day in the forenoon, we pray to God for wisdom and counsel, and each relates how he has been employed, or what has occurred in the congregations and schools, and in the printing and bookbinding offices, and in the private houses. Here every thing which might occasion disorder or detriment is adjusted, and those means are adopted which may best promote the general good. The conference being ended, the Portuguese and Tamul assistants make a report of their labours, and of whatever may be wanting, that as far as possible it may be supplied.”

This useful practice was regularly observed during nearly the first century of the mission, when, for some reasons which do not appear, it was discontinued.

After the conference thus referred to, Messrs. Kohlhoff and Swartz went down the river to a Tirkera, or Moorish hermitage, where, amongst others, they addressed a Fakir, or Mahomedan mendicant, to whom the nabob had given the

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place and the surrounding grounds. He acknowledged that he had three wives and four-and-twenty children, and that he was much addicted to the use of intoxicating drugs. With this man they urged the base and licentious character of Mahomedanism, and the superiority of Christian principles; he admitted the truth of their representations, and promised to visit them at Cudalore.

On the 5th of March, the four missionaries again held a biblical conference on Acts x. 38, in which they encouraged each other humbly and earnestly to implore the communication of the Holy Spirit, that in the power of that divine grace they might, after the example of their heavenly Master, "go about doing good." Swartz concluded with an impressive prayer, that the Lord would vouchsafe to them a permanent blessing from that hour; that according to his promise he would fill them, their brethren, and all their fellow-labourers, with his Spirit, for the sake of the great Mediator and Saviour; that he would preserve them from venturing on any service relying on their own strength, but that they might go forth in his power, that thus labouring they might never want all necessary light, strength, and blessing.

Early the next day, the four missionaries again united in thanksgiving and prayer; and in the

strength of their Redeemer, entered into a covenant to be his, to serve him with all their heart, and thenceforward with renewed energy to preach the gospel to the poor Gentiles around them. "Now," said Swartz, "the Lord has heard what we have spoken before him. May he give us light, life, strength, and prosperity!" The Cuddalore brethren accompanied him and Mr. Kohlhoff a few miles, and then separated after a cordial farewell, and wishing them abundant grace and blessing.

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On their return to Tranquebar they had frequent opportunities of scattering the good seed of the word of God among Peons in the Dutch service, and Hindoos and Mahomedans from the neighbouring towns. Most of these were fishermen, of which class of natives, though there are many Roman Catholics in the south of the peninsula, few have ever been converted by the Protestants. The two missionaries, sometimes in brief, and at others in longer addresses, declared the nature of the true God, and the vanity of idols, the misery of sin, the inefficiency of Pagan ceremonies, and particularly of bathing in the sea, to which many whom they met were resorting, and the only effectual atonement of the cross. To those who made inquiries or urged objections, they gave suitable and often satisfactory replies, and received promises of farther attention to their

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instructions. To some Romish Christians they pointed out the errors of image-worship and of purgatory, and exhorted them to repentance, faith, and true godliness; and finding at one place at which they rested some Protestant converts, they preached to them, inquired as to their domestic devotions, and reproved the negligent.

On the 9th they were met by one of their Tranquebar brethren, and on approaching the mission house, the Tamul school children welcomed them by singing a metrical version of Ecclesiasticus, i. 22—24, "Now let us praise the Lord," which is in universal use among Protestants on the continent. The missionaries blessed the children, and shortly afterwards their remaining brethren met them, and united with them and with several officers of the Danish troops at Tranquebar, in the following devout and fervent thanksgiving and prayer offered up by Mr. Swartz.

"Praised be thy name, O Lord, in profound humility, for all the grace, protection, and blessing which, during the whole of our journey thou hast graciously bestowed upon us of thine undeserved mercy, for the sake of Christ our Mediator! May the seed of thy word, which we thy poor servants have sowed on our journey, spring up and produce abundant fruit, that we, and those who have received the word into their hearts, may praise and adore thy goodness to all

eternity! May the union with our brethren at Cuddalore, which has been renewed afresh in thy sacred presence, be productive of abundant blessing! Our supplications, which we have jointly brought before thy footstool, with regard to ourselves and the flock entrusted to us, vouchsafe graciously to hear, and to let us perceive it, for the strengthening of our faith. And thus begin anew to bless us, and to prosper the work of our hands. Yea, prosper thou our handy-work, O Lord, for the sake of Christ, and of his bitter sufferings and death! Amen."

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