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Tagebuch von Johann Ernst Geister und Johann Zacharias Kiernander.

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Cuddalore, 01.01.1740-29.12.1740

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February

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diligence. As for the Portuguese School I designed to take every day an hour to instruct the Boys but finding so much other Business, I resolved to take them four times a week, & go on in teaching them the high-language I finished to day the Gospel of St. Luke.

20. Upon a due consideration I found it necessary to take again the explanation of the Catechism, and Scripture Sentences which the children had learned by way of Repetition to the eldest of them and as a new instruction to those that might be ranged in the second Class. To day I began the Catechism.

24. In my Sunday's afternoons instruction I ended Exodus, past over Leviticus, (my design being only upon the historical part) and begun Numbers.

My first Sermons this Month were on the Doctrine of the holy Ghost, & the last, on the State of the first Man's Innocence and his unhappy fall from it.

I had the uneasiness to see that a certain Portuguese (who had two Children in the School and as a pretended Protestant came frequently to my Sermons, whom I had obliged several ways and christened a new born child of his on the 8th of this month) abused me in a very impudent manner. He desired leave to have his Children at home for a day which I granted, but the children not coming again, when I went for them, it was told they were indisposed, and took Physick but should be with me in a day or two: afterwards on a second message the boy was only sent, and the Girl kept under some pretence. I suspected something, and therefore insisted that the Girl should be sent immediately. Upon this the man began to talk high blaming me for my ill management, & hard wage, that the children were used unmercifully, starved, & naked assuring me withall that he was not only absolutely resolved to take his children from me but he would cause the Parents of the other children to do the same. The impudence of this man, was so much the greater because it was known that he was an ill Economist & lived extremely poor and that even when he brought his Daughter to School the cloth she had on to cover her nakedness, was borrowed, & went away again as I provided others for her. Though this was a provoking injustice yet I tryed all fair means to bring the man to a reasonable Sentiment. But finding that nothing would do I applyed to the Gentleman his Officer, who was so kind, as to order him, to send the child again, & not to use me any more in so unhandfome a manner. I had very

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strong suspicions that the Romish Priest was at the bottom of this affair, — because it was Lent now, and last year I had a dispute about that Season. But as I obtained my End, I saw no Reason to enquire any further.

March.

16th I went in the Evening to the Pagoda at Tripptalore and found an opportunity to talk with a few People, but as I came there pretty late, I was obliged to leave of very soon. In my Journal I have chiefly inserted those Discourses, which in a manner might be called formal, when I talked to them in a publick place before a number of People. But besides these there is hardly a day — without an opportunity to talk something useful to one or other though it should be only as by the way. Because I walk two or three times in a week within and without Suddalore, and find occasion to speak here and there. Besides I am visited now and then by Bramines and other Malabars. But in the most confident and various way I talk with the old man who Teaches me the Language, because in reading with him the Books, that are full of enormous falsehoods, I take hold of these opportunities to discover to him the horrid contradictions of their authors. About this time I read in one of their Chronicles an Enconium of an Idol which all of them worship and represent with an Elephants head. The Author praises amongst other things his God for having now and then — the 3 Sorts of madness, which are incident to Elephants: and this was described in a lively though very nauseous manner, The Author expressing in a lofty — way how an unclean humour run down from both his Ears &c. Being strangely surprized at this I asked the old man how they could ascribe madness to what they call a Deity and how they could worship such a one. He was a little startled, but recollected himself and told me that this must be understood in a mythical sense. I was quite struck with that and could not forbear saying with an Emotion: what a downright miserable & blinded perverted people are You? It is not enough to represent your Gods as committing all manner of Debaucheries, Vices, & Crimes which the worst of men commit but you must bring in the Brutes too, and praise your Gods for being subject to brutish madness. The old man seemed to be moved very much and in a manner disturbed, though I cannot say if he was convicted or if he was angry. Though the reading of these Books is a very tedious Business — yet I find it necessary for two Reasons, 1. because I can learn the Language so much the better. 2. Because I discover all their Science and knowledge, and therefore when I discourse with them they cannot reply that I am not acquainted with their Learning. This is their common Evasion, whenever

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