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Tagebuch von Johann Ernst Geister und Johann Zacharias Kiernander.

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Cuddalore, 01.01.1740-29.12.1740

13. - 22. März 1740

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urn:nbn:de:obv:ha33-1-187648

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an European asks something or forms an objection, that they say: we have so many valuable Books, containing all manner of knowledge, & if you had read them you would judge quite otherwise of us. I

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13- Having finished the Portuguese School the verbal explanation of the Catechism I proceeded to the Scripture Sentences. The Children advance now pretty well in understanding the Portuguese language though it does not go on without difficulties, of which the chiefest is that the natives of these parts are not used to meditate deliberate and reason on a subject, but what they learn is merely by memory.

22- Going again to Trippaploze & coming near the Pagoda I found the Head-Bandaram before his house on the Royal or large bench, he asked me to sit down, & as soon as we begun to talk a good number of people came about us. I asked some questions about their Geography, Chronology &c. and objected chiefly against their strange way of reckoning the time which was not by decades, centuries, or millenaries, but always by Millions, their Chronologie being divided in 4 Periods each containing near or above a Million of years and all their particular Histories are thrown in one or other of these Periods without determinating the year. I told him that as every thing happeneth in a particular Year Month or Day, it was proper that History Writers should mention the particular time. Here I made a Digression acquainting him, that the history, that was preserved amongst the Europeans was wrote in such a way that Geography & Chronology was taken care of with all possible exactness and nicety I enlarged here a little against the prejudice & ill opinion, they have of the Europeans, assuring him that they were exceeding carefull to find and preserve truth & that the Malabars were in the Wrong when they pretended to judge of the Europeans whose books they had never Read nor enquired after their knowledge and Learning, of which they should find an account if they had a desire to converse with me. He answered only in General that his Countrymen had not been so careful as to preserve such particulars. After some discourse on this Subject I asked him if they had original Copies of their chiefest Books because I found such a great difference, that of the Copies now extant, not one agreed with the other. He answered that they had originals. Qu: where are they? Are they to be had in this or any other neighbouring place? Answer: we do not much care to know where they are, it is enough to know, that they are. When I saw him brought to that extremity, I did not insist further, but turned the Discourse on another Subject, & after having

talked

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talked about half an hour, I took my leave and went home. several of the Auditors followed me and viewed themselves very satisfied with what they had heard from me, and that the Candaram could answer nothing against my Objections. I spoke a few Words more and told them I should be glad if any body, that had a desire for truth, would come to my lodging & enter into a nearer Conversation with me. Hitherto the main design in most of my discourses has been to convince them of the insufficiency and invalidity of their knowledge, because I cannot suppose that people will desire and enquire for a better knowledge, as long as they believe that theirs is good true and sufficient. But if under divine blessing, I can but once gain this point with them, I have reason to believe that they will ask me if I can give them a better Instruction.

23. This Sunday afternoon I came to an End with the Historical part of the fourth Book of Moses.

24. Having been desired to Christen a Gentleman's Daughter at the Fort, I went over this afternoon to administer holy Baptism.

30. In my Sunday's afternoon Lecture I took the Historical part of Deuteronomy.

31. To day arrived Ambrose, a Malabar Christian from Tranquebar, who upon my desire was Recommended to me by the Missionaries, as a Catechist & Schoolmaster. After a due deliberation I found it necessary to have such a one in my Service, because, though I have done all, what I can to converse in a Friendly manner with the Indians, yet there is Reason to believe that they will be more inclined to see one of their own Countrymen, who has embraced Christianity converse with them, who in a manner may be a Mediator betwixt them & a European Missionary. For his monthly Wages was appointed $1\frac{1}{4}$ Pagoda.

In my Sermons, I have proposed the Doctrine of Sin, endeavouring chiefly to give my Auditors an insight into the nature of Original Sin.

April

6. This Sunday afternoon I begun to read and explain to the Children the Books of Joshua.

9. In my daily instructions I begun for two hours every week to read with the Children the Gospel of St. John.

15. A Child of a High-German in the Military Service was christened by me.

Finis