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Tagebuch von Johann Ernst Geister und Johann Zacharias Kiernander.

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June

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better behaviour and capacity. For his monthly wages I appointed 14 Tanam.

July

3 With the beginning of this month, I found myself a little better and began to day to teach the Children again, as likewise
6. I preached again, but found myself almost sick again upon it so that I resolved to forbear till I should find myself quite well.

11- I ended the verbal explication of St. John's Gospel and the 16th began the Acts of the Apostles.

Though my indisposition did not increase, it did not much abate because the weather continued to be exceeding dry and hot, so that hardly any Gentleman in the Place escaped from being less or more affected by it.

27. I could not venture to preach, yet I christened a new born Child of the Cathectist Ambros, though I was very low in Body and Mind.

As some time ago I had to some inhabitants communicated my design of beginning a School two or three of them addressed themselves to me offering their Children amongst whom was a Merchant of good repute, who more than once came and intreated me to begin. I was pleased with this favourable prospect, yet I was very doubtful, that if I should propose my whole Scheme to them, about the method and regulation of the School, they would go back at once.

Therefore I answered them in a doubtful way intermixing some engaging things, for instance, that in case the School should begin and go on, the Children should learn not only what they commonly learn in their Schools but that afterwards if they were inclined, I would find an opportunity to teach them Portuguese or English writing upon Paper &c. In the mean time I sounded the old man who instructs me in the language how the malabars would take it if in some particular or other I should deviate from their way of Teaching Children. He approved some & disapproved other particulars. At last I told him plainly that the people might vend their Children, upon this express condition that nothing idolatrous must be heard in the School, because I had never received nor expected assistance from their Gods, but my only help was in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. They readily consented, and I promised them to begin shortly. Another difficulty came in the way how to begin and end the School with prayer to the only true God. I designed first to draw up a formal Prayer & that in the name of Christ. But I considered that it would be improper to make the Children pray to a God & Saviour yet unknown to them and that this very Circumstance would make the People suspicious and alienate the People from me. Therefore after some deliberation, I found this expedient
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that the School might be begun and ended with a solemn declaration of a dependance from the only true and living God as follows:

In the morning

If the only Lord, the Creator, Redeemer and giver of Gifts, to all that liveth, assist us, our Business for this day will prosper. Therefore we begin the School with due veneration and confidence upon him.

In the evening

As the Lord has assisted us to day, we humbly thank him, believing that we shall further be happy under his Favour and help. When I had given my word to begin shortly, the Schoolmasters in the Place, apprehended, that all the Children would come to me, by which they would lose their livelihood. But I let them know, that I would prevent this, 1st by taking only poor peoples Children who could not pay for the School, 2^{dly} by not exceeding the number of 12 Children. I thought proper to begin with a small number, 1st that I might be capable to try and manage it easier, as it was a new scheme the success and other circumstances of which I could see only by Experiment which would be less difficult by a small number, 2^{dly} Because if I had brought together a great number (which perhaps might have been done) and the scheme should have miscarried, it would have been interpreted much to my Prejudice.

At last (trusting in God) I appointed the 29th of this month for the beginning, and gave notice to those that would send Children. But then a new difficulty was started, because the appointed day was not accounted a lucky one, & the next following seemed to be the more fortunate for the beginning of a Business. I was wavering at first, if I should condescend or not but on consideration resolved to begin in God's name & not to give way to Divination and Soothsaying. Therefore I told them plainly that I would stand by my resolution and not mind their fortunetelling. And I had the Pleasure to see four Boys brought by their Parents, with whom I made the beginning reading myself the abovementioned Form, ordering the Schoolmaster that in the morning and evening he should put the Children decently in a Row, and read before them the prescribed Forms. The Schoolmaster is the abovementioned Ambros, from Tranquenbar, and the Old man is there too in these hours when he does not instruct me. This has been a means to move the People so much the more to send their children because the Old man has formerly been the best Schoolmaster in the Place & only gave his School up, because he found himself by his age not vigorous enough for this Laborious work.

No new expences are made on account of this School, because

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the Children are only instructed and not maintained & as for Pens Paper Ink and the like no money is wanted, because they sit on the ground having Sand before them in which they write with their Fingers & blot it out again.

The Regulations of Lessons and other Particulars is left for a while to the Old man until I can acquaint myself fully with their ways and methods and afterwards judge how to manage the Thing in the most proper way.

In the main it was to me a matter of Joy and thanksgiving to God Almighty who in his Paternal Providence has brought me a Step farther, which makes me hope that one time or other I shall see that the laudable designs of the Hon^{ble} Society and my poor Endeavours are not in vain but shall have the desired effect.

August

- 1st. Francisco de Souza, who had been dismissed last year was taken again into School, One of his Relations had entreated me earnestly, to do something for the boy who idled away his time, & had no opportunity to learn. I answered him in the Negative, putting him in mind of the troubles which I had had last year on that account and that I had no desire at all for new uneasiness. To this the reply was that the like would not happen again his Relations being very sensible of the mistake they had committed. Upon repeated desires and assurances I promised to try once more and the boy was brought accordingly.

It pleased God now to restore me gradually to health & strength so that I could apply myself to my work.

- 4th. Finding now that the Boys made a tolerable Progress in the high Portuguese, I resolved to try how it would go with the English for which purpose I appointed the time from 9. to 10. in the morning on Mondays and Tuesdays and to day beginning was made.

- 17th - The Season being now more tolerable I saw myself strengthened so far that I preached again to day.

In the night after ten o' Clock I was most agreeably surprized with the unexpected arrival of the three new Missionaries, their Captain having been so kind as to set them ashore here. There was abundant matter of Joy on both Sides and we united in prayer, thanking God for all his undeserved mercies bestowed upon us. I endeavoured to receive and accommodate them as well as the Circumstances would permit.

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