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Tagebuch von Johann Ernst Geister und Johann Zacharias Kiernander.

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Cuddalore, 18.01.1741-28.12.1741

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A Journal,
Containing the most material circumstances, happening in the latter
six months of the Year 1741,
with the British Mission at Cuddalore near Fort St. David.
July.

With the beginning of this Month one of the Portuguese Schoolboys was dismissed, and entered in the military Service. There was a strong suspicion, that some of his roman catholic relations, endeavoured to entice him away to Portichery, therefore we thought this to be the best way to keep him here, in this place, as the boy was willing to be a souldier.

About the middle of the month we made a regulation in the Portuguese School, that the boys should learn English every day, and 10. hours in the week taken on that account.

Upon this a boy out of the malabar School on desire of his relations was admitted to the English lessons.

24. We received a short letter from Mr. Newman, dated Febr: ye 6th 1740.
26. A newborn child of the malabar catechist, Ambros, was baptized.

In the Portuguese sermons we continued to preach upon the Epistle to the Colossians, and in the malabar congregation some Gospel Texts of St. Matthew have been explained.

Having again in the daily catechisation ended the explanation of the Catechism, the exercises in the Portuguese language were resumed with the literal explanation of the latter part of the Acts.

This month we had an account from Franguebar, that Mr. Agreen, Commander in Tanjapatnam, of whom we have mentioned before, did lately dye.

August.

5. Some malabar merchants from the Country visited us. We shewed them maps & books, & our discourse was chiefly upon the insufficiency of the malabarian learning & knowledge. They could not but approve, what was told, yet, as usual, it did not seem to move them much.
6. We went on an invitation to the weddinghouse of an inhabitant who lives near us. They received us civilly, and we began, after some other discourses to talk with a young Braman there. But others of the company excused him that he had not yet acquired capacity enough, to answer us. So we went no further, and after a short stay retired.
10. To day soon after midnight dyed our Governour, James Hubbard Esq: having been ill some weeks. He was buried in the evening, one of us reading the service, and the other accompanying the Corps.

22. In the morning arrived from Madras the Worshipfull Augustus Burton, Esq: as our new deputy Governour, we went to the Fort to pay our respects to him, and he received us very kindly. We likewise dined with his Worships in company of all the Gentlemen.

23. The Governour coming to Cuddalore in the evening was so kind as to honour us with a short visit.

This month we preached in the portuguez congregation upon the first epistle to the Thessalonians.

As the weather begins to cool (though the season is not quite healthfull;) we have been capable to keep closer to our malabarian exercises, and are resolved, to acquaint ourselves with the plainest and easiest stile, endeavouring to avoid as much as possible, all prejudices and mistakes.

We have likewise continued our conversation with the inhabitants at home as well as abroad.

September.

Some natives have now and then, visited us, and given us an opportunity to talk of usefull things. Upon ones asking about the cause of evil and misery amongst mankind, our answer was, that it did not come from such a time, place or other external and remote cause, but that it was within us, and consequently the cure must begin where the evil was.

Another time some Porto novo people came to us and discoursed for a while, allowing that to be true, what was proposed. But when the application was made, and the question formed: why they would not endeavour actually to follow truth? The eldest of them answered: that the natives of this country were like sheeps which followed the bellweather only, without minding, if it was right or wrong. To prove that this was a false and dangerous thing, it was replied, that in wordly things they were prudent enough not to act according to such a Principle, because when they fled from Portonovo to Cuddalore, they enquired first after the road, & did not blindly follow any one whom they saw running.

8. We dispatched part of our Journal with a letter to England.

Our Sermons and other instructions have been continued upon the same texts as before, and in the Portuguez Sermons the first Epistle to the Thessalonians has been ended.

The two Christian Children in the malabarian School have begun to learn the Catechism.

As we hear not yet of the arrival of the later Ships, and the rainseason cometh on, we rely upon Providence under this disappointment, and hope to hear of the Ships returning from

Bengal

Bengal after the rain in about three months time. Because it is believed, that by some accident or other the Ships came so late to these parts, that they were obliged to go first to Bengal.

October.

4. According to our resolution, we began to preach in the Portuguese congregation, on the Doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

9. In the daily catechizing of the Portuguese children, the explanation of the Acts being done, the first Epistle of St. Peter was begun in the same method.

13. This afternoon Gu: went to Tripore, in order to continue the conversation with some inhabitants there. In the way I overtook some people, and going along with them began to talk of the several dangerous errors and mistakes of the country people.

They took it pretty indifferently, and so we parted. I went afterwards to some Streets at Tripore, and came at last to the Pagoda, where amongst many other people, I met at last with the formerly mentioned Priest. There had been that day a solemnity for the Bramines to fill their bellies, and my discourse began with asking about the circumstances of the solemnity. After an exchange of few questions and answers the discourse was carried to the main point of truth and happiness. I spoke to them somewhat large in the following way, that after I had begun to acquaint myself with their books & learning, I found such an extravagant confusion, that for some years, I took all of it to be nothing but the meer production of their poets and orators wild fancies. But after some time I met with things which seemed to have a resemblance with the Grecian and Egyptian antiquities; and searching further, I discovered several things which confirmed my conjectures to a high degree of probability. Here I enlarged on the History of Alexander the Great, his conquering Darius etc; and told them how this was expressed in their books, what circumstances were true, and what were the additions of the Poets etc; concluding at last with this, that according to their proverbial expressions, the truth contained in their books might be compared to a mustard seed to which their poets had added mountains of falsities, mixing all so together that it was almost impossible to distinguish now one from the other. I told them further that they were much in the wrong, to be so unmindful of important things as to take all in a lump on other peoples credit, and that they ought to take hold of proper opportunities for finding truth; to which purpose I offered them my endeavours. This discourse seemed to raise their attention, hearing a European talk of antiquities, the knowledge of which in their idle way of thinking they take to be in their sole possession. The Priest by way of answer spoke something, which