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Tagebuch von Johann Ernst Geister und Johann Zacharias Kiernander.

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A Journal.

Containing the most material Circumstances happening in the latter Six Months of the Year 1742.

With the British Mission at Cuddalore, near Fort St. David's.

July.

15. We received from Tranquebar a Chest with Books and a Box with Medicines, which by the kindness of Professor Franch had been forwarded and sent on board of the Danish Ship.

16. To day we had the pleasure to receive our English Letters and to hear that the Silver and other benefactions designed for us were happily come to Madras. We humbly acknowledge the favour of Divine Providence and the continuing kindness of our Superiors and Benefactors in Europe.

21. We had Letters from Germany and find that the Reverend Professor Franch has ordered again the value of 100 L . for carrying on of our work, which money we are to receive from our Brethren in Tranquebar.

The Season begun to be very disagreeable and Troublesome, for want of rain, and sometimes winds, so that we found ourselves almost quite Incapable for a serious Application of mind, which to our regret retarded our Business.

In our Sermons and other instructions we continue in same way as last Month. In the Portuguese School, the explanation of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians has been begun.

August.

Our new Malabarion Schoolmaster asked leave, that his Younger Brothers might be admitted to the English Lessons in the Portuguese School, which was granted.

We have these many months found our selves much straitned for want of room in the Mission House, though we could not think of building, for want of money. But as Providence has helped us out of these difficulties by a new supply from Europe, we deliberated and conferred together how to add something to the building in a most convenient and ^{least} chargeable way. It might perhaps be thought superfluous to make Additions, since the House is large and commodious enough. But the difference of the Climate, Seasons and other Circumstances in these parts of the world, require more House room than in Europe. The great change from dry to wet, and

From hot to cool in this country does not permit to put and stow things so close together as can be done in other Climates, but one must endeavour, to keep every thing as cool and airy as Possibly can be.

The greatest coolness here in January and February is not colder than what in 50 Degrees Latitude is call'd Pleasant warmth, which has been tryed by an exact Thermometer from Germany, and in general one may judge of it by this, that about the same time of the Year Lemon, Orange and other Trees flourish and thrive lustily in open grounds, and are not in the least hurt even, by stormy Northerly winds. But by this one may judge further how hot, and dry it must be, when there is not a drop of Rain sometimes for four, or five Months, and the Sun just over ones head. Then all what is made of Flesh shrinks and cracks, and one can feel what the torrid Zone is.

After that, Rain will sometimes Shower down plentifully Day and Night, which makes the Air so moist that every thing in the House is whetted and the best writing paper, though kept in an inner room, in a press or Desk, will not bear Ink. Now if one should be in a necessity to keep all his Stores, Provisions &c. close together, and stowed one upon another, it may easily be Imagined how things would be spoiled. But this is not the worst yet.

There is such a number of all sorts of Vermin, and some of them venomous, some known in Europe, some not, who Increase so fast, because there is no cold to destroy them, as in the Northern parts, and some of them so noxious, that one does not know sometimes how to kill them fast enough.

This makes one put every Chest &c. by it self, and look out every Day on all sides. we endeavour by all possible means, to keep every ^{thing} clean in and about the houses, and yet we have Killed Snakes in our rooms, several in our grounds, and once one in the Hall, which was ~~a~~ seven foot long, and of that kind, whose bite against all remedies brings Death in an Hours Time. Scorpions, Lizards and all the like are our constant Companions, and do not surprize us if we find them in a drawer or Box. This digression has been made only to prevent Misunderstandings, as if we had other motives for building

Than meer Necessity. As for the particulars we have resolved to build 1.) a Shed for Materials, for the Palanquin, biers &c. 2, a Little Godown or Storeroom, 3, a little Brick house for the Catechist, because he had lived hitherto in a Mud house, which by its always requiring to be repaired, was so Chargeable, that it made us uneasy to look at it. To lessen the Charges we resolved to build this on the street side where there is a wall already, so that we want only a Wall within, and the Repartition Walls.

About the middle of this month one of our house Servants discovered a desire to turn Christian, on which we told him, that he should come to the Sermon on Sundays, and that we would take further care to instruct him.

23. The Chest books &c. sent from England this Year for Juddalore were delivered us to day, being forwarded from Madras by M^r Schultze.

28. We sent away part of our European Letters, Journal etc. to Madras to go to England with the September ship.

30. In the Afternoon I went to Tripaplore, with a design to converse with somebody or other. Passing through the street, which goeth up to the great Pagoda, I found ^{one} of the inhabitants sitting on a great bench before his door, with whom I begun to talk, and he asked me to sit down. we had seen one another before, and by his appearance and Yellowness of his skin I always took him to be a Braman, but on my enquiry he told me that he was of another Tribe, and that he was of the Renters, who have farmed all the fields and open Grounds within the Companies limits, and a great part of the Country without. By this I found that he was a Man of Note.

After some general discourses he happened to come to the doctrine of destiny, and that every thing in the world was overruled by Gods will.

Answered, it was true, that all was made by God according to his will and pleasure, but that this could not excuse a Man, that would make a wrong use of Gods creatures. Having a Case in my hand, I told him, that this was a part of creation and had its existence from Divine will, but that People might use it to bad or good purposes. A person of sense would find it usefull to support himself with it going up or down Hills, or being

in a Slippery place, but a bad Man perhaps might beat or kill another with it. He replied that even such an Action, and the Man's Capacity to do such an Action was from God. Hereupon I found it necessary to enlarge upon this Argument in the following manner. You must Consider first of all that God has made Mankind, & that they should be happy Creatures. Now happiness cannot be without a free Choice. If for instance you would force one to Live upon Sweetmeats, Milk and Sugar, it would be disagreeable, because it was not his own Choice, and he would wish to be at Liberty again to eat and drink what was thought life delicious. It is necessary therefore, that God should give to Mankind the faculty of Choosing, and by this make them capable to be happy. But we find further that God has given to Mankind the capacity of Knowledge and Judgment, so that if they will but apply it rightly, they may find the true use of other Creatures, but if they suffer themselves to be hurried away by their passions, it is their own doing and their own fault, if they do wrong. Therefore taking all these things together it follows plainly that we cannot make God the Author of bad Actions. He seemed to understand me very well, but ^{for} some Reason or other he began, in an abrupt manner to talk of a certain book which explained all the Religious and civil customs of this Country, saying, that if I saw that book, I should find that as for the Religious part it agreed fully with my Opinions. He added that many Years ago it had been translated in English at Madras and a copy of it sent to England. I knew of this Book when I was yet at Madras, but though care was taken to come at it, neither the Original nor a Copy could be found. Hearing now of it again, I expressed a desire to see it, and he told me that he would certainly procure the book and find a Person to translate it for me in the ^{Malabar} Malabarian Language, because it was wrote in a Poetical dialect. We went on in our discourses on several points till a little after sun-set, when I mentioned amongst other Particulars, that I had endeavoured to be acquainted with the Fryar or Pandaram in the Pagoda, because he seemed to be a Man of Sense and Learning. The renter told me, that the Pandaram

was but an Indifferent Scholar, but there was now in the place a Man renowned for his Holyness &c.

For a superstitious degree, whom they adored as a God etc.

And if I had a mind he would go with me to see him. I answered, that I should be very glad of it, and so we went. As we passed by the Pagoda, we found the Pandaram there, and he Accompanied us. I found they carried me to the outer part of the Place, because the Holy men in these parts are like the Popish Monks, who have left the world. A Messenger was sent before us, and as we came to the door, a little debate arose about the Ceremony, because the Holy man expected a downright Adoration, which they apprehended, I would not consent to, and further there was neither a chair nor bench in the House, so that I must either Squat down, on the Ground, or Stand. I told them, that If there was the least difficulty or uneasiness on their sides, I had no mind to intrude myself, but as for my part Standing or Sitting was the same to me. So this Impediment being removed we went in. The Saint sat in the Yard on a mat upon the ground stark naked, so that he had only a small piece of cloth just enough to cover his Privities, his head was Shaved, his body very clean adorned on the forehead and breast with Ashes of Cowdung. He seemed to be well shaped Man, of Age betwixt 30 & 40, as far as I could judge, though I could not well discern his Features, because it was dark already. The Kenter payed him the Adoration laying his hands together, lifting them up and then stooping down so that he touched the Saints feet with his hands, and then put himself in an upright posture again. To this the Saint smiled a little, but did not stir in the least. When my turn came, I pulled off my hat, bid him Salam, (which is the common word of compliment in this Country,) and put on my Hat again. After a few words, who I was, from whence &c. we came to talk of the only true God, to which the Saint and the by standers agreed unanimously, saying that all the Divisions of Sects and the like were a mere falsity etc. I told it was a Paradox to me, to hear them talk in private at such a rate, and yet he and his Fraternity.

where the very People, whose only business it was, to keep up Idolatry, and the different Sects. How could they say now that they acknowledged and served the only true God? And if they actually believed that to be true what they said just now, why did they willingly deceive this Nation under pretences of being their Teachers and Leaders? They could not refuse this, but endeavoured to extenuate the thing, as if the difference of their Sects was not so great, and that at the end all would terminate in one. I went on asking them, suppose they should see or hear, that the people of one Town or Province were divided and both parties destroying one another, if they could believe, that this was by order of the King, and that both Parties had no other design but to act in Obedience to their King and for their own Benefit, and it would end in nothing else, but that the King's will would be done, both Parties being concerned ^{faithful Subjects, who would for would do so} by so doing. I mentioned an instance out of their Histories, where they say, that in some Ages ago in a Place called Madurei, (to the Southwest from hence) There was a Solemn dispute, which of the two main Sects was the best and truest. This was done by the order of the then governing King, and Thousands of People of both parties came together. The Headsmen of the two parties having disputed a long while, could not bring the matter to a Decision. At last they agreed to make it out by a Miraculous Trial, and all the Followers of that party that lost, should be impaled alive, for which purpose numbers of Stakes were made ready before hand. The Trial was to be thus, that each party should write some heads of their Opinion upon Palm leaves, and throw them afterwards in the fire. That party whose Palm leaves were not hurt, should be accounted the true Sect, and the other false. when it came to the Trial, History and Tradition says, that one Palm leaf remained unhurt, and the other burnt to ashes. The losing party pretended, that there had not been fair Play, and appealed to another Trial. Viz.

That Palm leaves should be wrote as before, and thrown in the River on which the Town is situated, and if any Party's leaf should swim against the current, that Party ^{should gain if day, it happened that 1/2 of that party} who were gainers in the first tryal, swam against the current, and therefore by order of the King, as many as could be taken of the other Sect were impaled alive, few expected who turned Proselytes, and those that could escape fled to other Countries. Having finished my story, I returned to my Question, and desired their opinion, if this could be the will of the same God, and if this would end in the Pleasures and services of the same Deity. They could say nothing, only they expressed one to another their surprize, how I could be acquainted with such Particulars. As it was late and I had Three Miles to go home. I asked the Saint if we would stay some days in the Place, or if he designed once to come to Cuddalore, that I might have the Opportunity to converse more with him. He answered, that he could say nothing as to that, he had nothing of his own in this world, his home was every where, he had no will or designs of his own, he was in the Lord's hands, and drawn by the Lord ^{as} an Animal drawn by a halter or bridle, to Day he was in this Place, but he did not know, where he should be Tomorrow etc.

In a further discourse he said, that Sin and Evil came from ^{the} Objects without us, to which I replied, that all Creatures of God were good, only sinful Men made a bad use of them, and I repeated my Simile, which I had proposed before to the Kenter. The same Kenter told me more than once, that this Saint was their God whom they adored. Since he spoke this more than once, I could not help saying, that I adored the only God, who was above us all, and that I would not adore a Creature which had a Body, and Limbs like us. In the middle of our discourse the Saint asked his Countrymen why they would not sit down. The Kenter told him, that I as a European had my dress tight about the knees which would make it Incommodious to Squat down. So says the Saint, in a friendly way, and this make you all stand? After that he divided Sugar Candy amongst

us, of which I had my share to, and then we left him.

In the street the Renter told me that this Man resided some Leagues from hence within the Country, and had been called to Consecrate a New made Image in the Pagoda. And this Man ^{was up} ~~was~~ he, who seemingly in a composed manner could say before Company, that Idolatry was a wrong thing, and that he was drawn only by the Lord God. We returned the same way we came and passed by smaller Pagoda, where the Idols lady has her own house keeping by herself. The lamps being lighted up, and the Renter payed his Adoration, with both hands lifted up, and the same he did passing by the greater Pagoda. It shocks one, to see a Man who in his other Behaviour and Conversation shews a good deal of sense, on a sudden do such stupid things, the Reasonableness of which he cannot maintain, but must give up the Argument in a few Minutes. I set down at the Renter door once more upon his request, and having invited him to further Acquaintance and Conversation I took my leave.

31. To Day another Man signified his desire, to turn Christians with his Family. He was directed to acquaint himself, with our Catechist, and that we would not be wanting to take care of him in Religious matters?

September.

The season being not very healthful hindered us greatly in the main part of our Business.

We went on in order to finish that part of the building which was begun lately, though it proceeded slowly for want of materials; there being a great demand as well from the Company, as from several Inhabitants.

About the end of this month we had News that our Chests &c. sent out for us last Year were arrived from Bengal, at Madras, but that our Silver remaineth yet unsold at Calicatte, because the Maratters had entered that Country with a great army, which had put