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Tagebuch von Johann Ernst Geister und Johann Zacharias Kiernander.

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into the malabarian School, as likewise

10. One boy and

13 two boys more, whose fathers are English men, into the Portuguese School.

14. H: went out this afternoon with a design to converse with Somebody or other in the neighbouring villages. In going the way towards Wandelpaleiam, I met with some that carried pieces of a large tree they had cut down, and asking them what they designed to make of it, they answered: a waggon for their God, whom they called, Karierawitta Suwami, that is to say, the God that bringeth to happiness. Upon asking them, if their God stood in need of any waggon, they answered, that when they celebrate his Feast, they must put him upon the waggon and carry him through the village, and for that reason the waggon was necessary. I asked them further, how they could think that such a God any power at all to bring them to happiness, that could not so much as walk himself from one place to another, and who stood in need of their bringing him out of the Pagoda, and putting him upon the waggon, and carrying

him. where they themselves would have him. They looking upon one another, gave me no answer to this, but told me, if I would walk a little further where the tree was cut down, there were present two Bramans and a Pandaram, or Priest they would know better to talk with me upon this Subject. So I went along, and some of them followed me, whom I asked, why they trusted the Bramans and Pandarams so much as to rely upon their words and their ancient customs, not knowing themselves what true or false, exhorting them to enquire for the truth and not sit in the dark any longer. | to walk
In the mean time I came to the place, where the aforementioned tree was cut down. The Carpenter who was master of making the waggon together with several other people was present there. I began my discourse with the Carpenter, and asked him, who was greater he, or his God, for whom he was going to make his waggon. The Carpenter looked upon the Bramans and upon the Pandaram, but as they were silent and would not enter into the discourse, he answered at last himself, that the God was much greater; which words he spoke with a seemingly religious affection to his God.

But I told him that I did not think so, but that
he, the Carpenter was greater than his God. He
asked me, Sir why do you think so? I: I will
tell you: Your God stands there as one that is put
in prison, or rather like a dead one, he can not
move his legs for walking out, but you must
help him, he seemingly has a head, eyes, ears &c.
but all good for nothing, he has never given you
any thing, nor has he ever done any thing good
for you, or for others, he ever was like a dead
one and ever will be so, he never had, nor will
he ever have power of doing good or bad, & much
less is he able to bring you to happiness. But
you Carpenter, you cannot only move your hands &
legs, but you make several things that are good &
necessary for other men, you are not blind, deaf
or dumb as your God is. And now when your
God is so poor that he stands in need of a waggon,
it is a charity of yours to make one for him. Fur-
ther, your God doth not know how to make such a
thing, but you Carpenter, you know it very well. Now
who is greater, you, or your God? Certainly you car-

penker are greater. Then turning myself to the two Bra-
mans saying: And why do you adore that blockhead and call
him your God why do you not adore this Carpenter and say
that he is your God? The Brahmans being silent too long, the
Pandaram answered: Sir we do not say that that Image
itself is God, but when we adore it, we do it for to remem-
ber and adore the only God who is every where present. I:
well Pandaram, you talk something better, but how do you
know that the only God who is every where present, has
given such commandments that men should remember and
adore him in such a manner as you do. The Pandaram:
Our forefathers have always done so, and the Brahmans who
know the Vedam, tell us that we must do so. I: your
forefathers have erred and so you do, and your Vedam is
not the word of God nor any commandment of the only
God who is every where present, but is a cheat and hu-
man tradition, and its contents are contrary to the will
of the only God who is every where present, whom I adore,
in whom I believe, and whom I fear & love, whose holy
word I have with me, and have read it often from the
beginning to the end, from whence I know, that he
will not be served in that manner as you do. Then

the Carpenter desired me to sit down upon the tree
that was cut down, of which the greatest part still
remained. So I did, but then the two Bramans took
their leave, saying, they had some other business. As
it was near dusk perhaps they had some Ceremo-
nies to observe. But others that passed that road
gathered there, so that though the Carpenter dispatched
some of the labourers that carried away the branches
of the tree, there remained still a pretty congregation.
The carpenter desired me to tell him something out of
that book which I called the word of God. I took
hold of the opportunity, and discoursed upon the Attri-
butes of God, and the way of worshipping him ac-
cording to his will. To all which they were attentive,
and no objections were made; but the Pandaram in
the mean time observed himself secretly. The time
being spent & almost dark, I added only, that as
they heard now how much their way of worshipping
God, not only differed from what was the will of God,
but was quite contrary to it, they might know that
their worshipping never could please God, and that they
can expect no reward, as they imagine, but a just
punish-

punishment, and that the making of that waggon, and of images for to adore them and other such things belonging to them was a great sin. At last I desired the Carpenter to consider, before he works any more upon that waggon, if God Almighty who had made heaven & Earth and all that is within it, doth want his waggon. I invited them all to a further conversation if they had any desire to know the truth and to walk the right way to eternal happiness. And so I took my leave.

17. We received to day a short letter from England from on board the Dune, Capt. Hindman.

There have been hitherto some people that shewed an inclination to christian religion, though by some impediment or other we cannot yet ~~begin to do so~~ bring them to a regular preparation.

The scarcity of grain begin to be so great, that some times it cannot be had for money. We have therefore considered, how to help our Servants in this necessity, and we had the good luck by the procurement of a Gentleman at Fort St. David to be supplied
E.