

Franckesche Stiftungen zu Halle

Auszüge aus dem Tagebuch von Wilhelm Tobias Ringeltaube.

Ringeltaube, Wilhelm Tobias

Palayankottai, 19.06.1806

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N^o XVIII.

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The Transactions of the Missionary Society
London 1807. page 97.

Extracts from the Journal of the Missionary
Ringeltaube.

Palamcotta

June 19th, 1806.

Dear Brethren in the Lord,

The last report I sent you from Tranquebar will have informed you, that the good hand of the Lord had smoothed my way into the southern provinces, where it seemed, that a field of usefulness would open, without those tedious preparatory steps which must attend a mission begun on ground as yet unbroken. To be useful as soon as possible, was my leading view, leaving to those of my dear brethren, who are younger than myself, the more arduous & glorious task (Aushlymb.) of carrying the gospel where hitherto protestant missionaries never came. I have reason to bless the Lord of the harvest, that he graciously owned, in some degree, my feeble labours; & you will join me in thanking him, that one of your missionaries, for the last six months past, has preached Christ to numbers in an Indian tongue. This is a small beginning: the good news I have from all our dear brethren promises greater things in due time.

The last five or six months at Tranquebar I spent in great retirement & peace, making a gradual progress in the Tamulian language. Once a week I met with a few young brethren, some of whom were Roman catholics,

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catholicks, with a view to our mutual edification.
We formed ourselves into a small covenant flock of
Christ, under such rules for our conduct as seemed most
likely to promote our growth in grace. But we did not
separate from those Churches to which we severally be-
longed. The opposition & distance between the different deno-
minations is not so great as it is in Europe. The Lord
blessed us with brotherly love.

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Anxious as I ~~was~~ was towards the close of the year to come
away, as I thought my services to the distressed churches in
Tinnevely would be indispensably necessary (imagining
his will) yet for want of an opportunity I was detained
till the beginning of February 1806, when, for fear of losing
the monsoon, I hired a boat at the expense of 40 pagodas
to carry me down to Tuttaconryn. After the first days of
sea-sickness were over I spent my time pleasantly in coasting
Ceylon, & then from island to island, most of them uninhabited,
till early on the 9th, being Lord's day, I landed at Tuttaconryn.
As I sailed along the shore, I beheld an uninterrupted suc-
cession of Roman churches, built for the accommodation of the
Parrawans or fisher cast.

Going on shore at Tuttaconryn, I introduced myself every
where as a missionary, & attended the Dutch church, a spaci-
ous octagon building, where my countryman the Rev. Mr.
Cleaver, read a good discourse in Dutch to a few attentive
hearers. After the sermon, I heard the Tamil catechist, Rayap-
pan, preach an animated sermon to a small congregation of
Tamulens & Portuguese. At the close I addressed them in a
few stammering words, inviting them in the afternoon to the
old fort. At the appointed time I met them, to the number
of 40 or 50. spoke with them individually, & then addressed them
(for the first time extempore in Tamil) on the words of St
Paul: "The spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are
the children of God." I thought, I observed some impressi-
on. A Portuguese man & woman seemed to be the sub-
jects of saving grace.

When in the evening, sitting in the veranda of the old fort, (formerly the abode of power & luxury, now the refuge of a houseless traveller & thousands of bats suspended from the ceiling,) enjoying the extensive ~~power~~ prospect, & communing with my own heart, & the God to whom mercies & forgiveness belong, something frightened me by falling suddenly at my feet, and exclaiming, Tarubren Istotiram, i. e. God be praised; the usual words our Christians pronounce when greeting: I rejoiced to see an individual of that tribe, among whom I have been so anxious to labour. Entered into conversation with him, as well as I could, to ascertain his ideas about religion, but was soon nonplussed by his stupidity. (inl. in ner vinnun foil by ninn?) I could not force (Sammo binman) a word from him in answer to my plain questions, which he contented himself literally to give back to me. With a sigh, I was forced to dismiss him. The Sanaers are a set of people more robust than other Indians, very dark in complexion, their features completely European, their ears protracted to the shoulders by weighty ornaments of lead. They divide themselves into five families, one of which exclusively ascends the trees, from which practice their hands & feet acquire a peculiarly clumsy shape. Their religion is not Praminical, but consists in the worship of one Mandan, formerly a washerman. Their habits of life are extremely simple. They are quarrelsome, avaricious & deceitful.

February 11th Towards evening I set out in my palanquin for Palamcott. The country burnt up by the sun. The night I passed comfortably in the middle of the road in my palanquin, remembering some of my brethren in Greenland, Canada, &c. who probably might sleep in a cavern of snow. 12th The country improved as soon as I crossed the river Tambravany, about 50 paces broad. I travelled on an uninterrupted surface of granite strewn with gravel, with beautiful prospects in view of Theravancore hills till I reached Palamcott, an old square-built fort, of considerable dimensions, inhabited only by soldiers, & a few merchants. It contains two churches, both very small, the ~~first~~ one protestant, the other Roman catholic. My bearers had eaten nothing all the time since I came away from Tutta Coryn, but a little brown sugar for breakfast; with this support they carried me more than 30 miles in a short trot.

The first days were spent in making some necessary visits. All the gentlemen expressed themselves very kindly disposed towards my undertaking. 16th Preached English to a small congregation on the words, "What must I do to be saved?" & in Tamul, upon "Fear not little flock, &c. words that

that had been impressed on my mind, since I heard them addressed to us by Rev. Mr. H. at Harwich. The church can contain about 40 people: it is well built. A converted Bramin woman, now departed this life, built it a few years ago. After service, which lasted four hours without intermission, I was much spent ^{in the first time} ~~on my journey~~. The English congregation prefer the church of England service to any other form, and why should I not cheerfully comply?

17th Set out on my first circuit (unusually early in the morning) ^{Vinnygung Vytht}. Mr. Sawyer, a Portuguese merchant, & the great prop of this mission, kindly lending me his little horse. I shall be particular in describing this tour, as it is the first I made in these parts. An old catechist from Timore, a man of preaching talents, & much good will, accompanied me. After a ride of five hours across a barren plain without inhabitants, I arrived at a village called Katty, with two small churches, one Roman, the other protestant. The catechist, St. Sachu, appears to be an honest man, (no small character for an Indian,) but rather ignorant. None of the present congregation could answer the question, What must I do to be saved? I spoke on this subject as well as I could, & my companion addressed them more fully, & very ably, on the same. In the afternoon proceeded as far as Nazareth, where after prayer with the congregation, I lay down in the church. This is a small place belonging to the mission. It has a neat clay church, the roof of palmyra leaves. This congregation made a pleasing impression on me.

10th After having prayed, spoken & baptized some children, crossed the ped hills, an awful desert, that is formed by the drift sand blowing from the mountains. If tradition is to be credited, a large town is buried under it. From the top of this elevated plain you have an enchanting prospect of the sea, Tuttacoryn, Manapoor, Timtendow & Pafamcotta. The heat was intense, yet I was obliged to walk on foot to ease my little horse. At length, we reached a well under some banian-trees; rested a little, & proceeded to Jerusalem, another mission village in a fertile soil. Here we found only a palmyra-shed instead of a church. I spoke to a congregation of children on our Saviour's words, "Let little children come unto me." I was warned by my fellow traveller, that the people here were very bad, & I have since found abundant reason to believe them so. In the evening passed a little congregation, Nellandalam, where the people came to meet me; but I pushed on, in order to reach Coler segrapatnam, near the sea-shore. We passed bad clay grounds, where I was obliged to alight, & at nine at night reached our place, where we prayed, and I spoke on the words, "Stay with us, for the day is far spent." A good wood church, with an altar. An able man of low cast, Rajameng, is catechist here, & his wife Lidia helps him. He sings well, which is an uncommon talent in India. Slept again in the church at the foot

foot of the altar. About 300 people desire to be baptized; but they do not know why. 24th 1847

19th After morning prayer, rode along the beach to Monapar, where my friend Mr. G. — received me cordially. It was he, you know, who encouraged me to come to these parts. Here too is a Dutch factory, & a very large church built of free-stone. In the afternoon spoke on the words, "Woman, thy sins are forgiven thee" & baptized eight children. Many people are waiting here for baptism, but they are so ignorant, that I cannot yet make up my mind to grant it. (*in English I must first inquire in English* you.) None can give a reason, why they wish to be baptized. "For the good of my soul," the best instructed of them say; but there the catechism must end, or they are mute. In the dusk I visited a famous grotto, close to the rocky shore, under a fine Roman church (there are three in this place,) built far out on a projecting point. In this grotto, formerly, a heathenish hermit dwelt a great saint, & the well that runs in it is still resorted to from superstitious motives.

20th In the morning heard the catechist Raryanen catechise very ably indeed. Spoke with the people, who desire to be baptized. There seems nothing like a conviction of sin in them. At three o'clock, continued my journey through water, sands and palmyra forests, of immense extent, to Attigadu, where I prayed at the church, & then proceeded to Mogdaloor, not far from it, where there is a fine stone church, & a congregation of 800 souls. This is mission ground too. The congregation met me rejoicing, the poor creatures thinking (*in English I must first inquire in English*) that a missionary must bring them golden times! Before the church stands a building like a pigon-house, with a large kettle drum, to convocate the congregation. Its sound is heard deep into the palmyra woods. Honest young Abraham, from Tanjore, presides over this flock; there is a good school in this village. I spoke this evening upon the first commandment. The boys answered very sensibly. Afterwards Marndanagarham, a catechist from Tanjore, requested he might address the people. I granted this request, of course, and was astonished at his gifts. He catechised on the parable of the prodigal with uncommon efficiency. Service being ended, the people flocked to me, to speak of their — souls? I th no! — of their petty quarrels & complaints. How much was I discouraged by this scene, from going on with my work!

21st At four in the morning, walked back to Attigadu, to baptize

I baptize a child, & discoursed on the words, "I am the good Shepherd." After my return to Moodaloor, complaints poured so thick upon me, that at 11 o'clock I rode off, notwithstanding the heat being so tremendous. I certainly was too impatient, but I am but a young beginner. After an hour, reached Viserada Baram, a young congregation, that had just built a palmyra shed for a church. Here I prayed, feeling still indisposed to preach, from the scene that had passed, & rode slowly on to another village. But my horse fell under me, & I got a bruise, which gave me much pain, & I thought might have dangerous consequences. But this time I got off with the fear only, blessed be the Lord.

At noon I rested at the catchery (town-house) of Tattshambury, a large village full of temples, on the skirts of the Sanaer forest. We catechised & conversed with Neophytes, Moormen and heathen. The Moormen sneered, when we insisted on Christ's incarnation & death, & asked if we did not come from Rome. The heathen affected also to laugh, but a few words on the subject of their own ridiculous idolatry made them look very foolish. When I prayed over them with the christians, they became serious. However, I find I cannot yet address people, that are out of the church, from my own deficiency in the language. In the evening, proceeded to Pargroolam, where a little congregation, about 15 in number, have built a palmyra church. They were formerly Roman catholics, & left their church, owing to a quarrel with a priest. The congregation at this place, is in a state of great ignorance. My companion, in a very plain discourse, set before them the scriptural promises concerning our Saviour, shewing their accomplishment. I then prayed, & afterwards, we laid ourselves down to sleep in the church, but I could not close an eye, owing to a fever that hung upon my frame, & to the loud talking of the people without, who enjoyed the fine moonshine till three in the morning.

22^d. At four o'clock, being Saturday, I set out for my home.

About 11 we arrived again at Patty, where, my companions, being tired, stopped, & I left an order with them to keep a meeting in the evening with that congregation, while I proceeded on my way to Palamcotta, where I arrived at three in the afternoon much fatigued, but otherwise well in health. In the course of this week I travelled from 80 to 90 miles. Such trips are very expensive. I am obliged to carry necessaries & attendants with me, besides the catechists, & for all of whom I must provide.

23^d. Preached in English, and Vallapney afterwards preached in Tamil. On this day I received a visit from a worthy officer, a gentleman respected all over India, who had just come down from the Mahratta campaign.

He opened his heart & his purse to me, & likewise presented me with some chairs to furnish my naked rooms. This visit strengthened me very much; may the Lord reward him.

24th Received letters conveying the agreeable news that the society at home continues to direct their attention to our missions in India, & had provided supplies for the third year. Such letters from our dear directors are always ^{as agreeable as} like a voice from heaven.

25th Had an agreeable conversation with a goldsmith belonging to the little Indian flock here. This man has at least the language of Kanaan, perhaps he is a true believer.

27th Conversed with a Persae from Bombay on religious subjects.

This people, who fled from Persia, where they were persecuted by the Mahometans many centuries ago, are the disciples of Zoroaster, whom the learned, Prideaux thinks, was an apostate disciple of the prophet Daniel. They worship a good & evil god, together with the stars & the four elements. He showed me the printed manual of his cast in the Surat language. Their adoration is paid in temples, before a sacred fire of sandal-wood & spices, which ^{is} never suffered to go out. In such respect is fire held by them, that if their women meet with a brand in the forests, they carefully carry it home. They are a handsome & industrious people, & admit of a plurality of wives. They never make proselytes among adult persons, but often adopt & bring up children of other sects. They have great influence at Bombay, where the rich imitate the Europeans in their style of living, but always retaining their original dress.

28th Had a great deal of trouble to prevent a sacrifice in a mission garden, which was to be brought to an imaginary devil, residing in one of the trees, in behalf of a child that was sick. I at last had the tree cut down, & the sacrifice was then brought into the public place opposite the house ^{where} the child was ill.

29th Two Sanaens applied for baptism. I asked, why do you wish for it? A. replied, "My two brothers coming down from a palmyra-tree received a mortal blow on their chests by the devil. I want to be baptized in order to escape a similar fate." B. answered, "I want a good eye, a good hand & a good heart." They were, upon this ^{innuendo} spoken to as well as I could by way of directing them to Jesus Christ.

March 2^d Preached in English & Tamil, & baptized several children of Europeans. The heat in the fort is very oppressive. An old man from the westward applied for instruction. He seems to be sincere in wishing to obtain salvation for himself & his house, but is too far

So far off at present to come within my reach.

3d I drew up a plan for the better regulation of the congregations here, & in the evening set out on my second journey towards Flanery Chool, a country, a district bordering upon the sea. Reached Patty at nine in the evening. Mr. Sawyer again having had the goodness to lend me his horse. I prayed with the few people present & slept in the church. 4th Set out two hours after midnight. At 10 o'clock arrived at the prayer-house at Saneyenlam, where I rested, & then spoke with, & to the people. My companion, with a great stretch of zeal endeavored to prove that the Roman Catholic was not a christian church. I suffered him to enjoy his opinion. The night I spent at the town house at Tattshambuly. Here too we had prayer & a catechization.

5th Struck off into a new path more to the southward, & breakfasted at a place called Bethamy, where there is a handsome church, and considerable village belonging to the mission; here I convened the people, and chose & blessed elders, to whom I committed my instructions by way of trial, & prayed & spoke agreeably to the occasion. After breakfast I passed Elucolam, a small village in the woods, where, three months ago the people turned their pagoda into a christian church. They were all abroad and I therefore passed on to Vemanang Roady, where I addressed the congregation on the words "Our Father which art in heaven." The people here showed great affection to me, & ran after me half a mile, with a vessel full of palm-juice ^{fruit} ~~fruit~~ drawn from the tree.

About sun-set I arrived at Orary, a charming village close to the sea, with three Roman catholic churches. Traces of industry, beyond what is generally met with in this country, appeared every where. The people have taken considerable pains to cultivate a narrow stripe of sand, running parallel with the shore. Luxuriant tobacco plantations, with plaintain & cucumber gardens, salute the eye wearied out by the red desert. Here I thought, I should like to fix my abode.

I preached in the evening & on the following day settled many disagreeable affairs, by dismissing a catechist, who had long been very obnoxious. This is the same man, who is known in Europe as a chief of the Samaers, that embraced & preached the gospel. Five hundred neophytes * fell away in a late persecution (as it is called), but all the baptized people remained steadfast, to the number of two hundred.

6th In the evening proceeded to Rupdel, a christian village on the shore, with a handsome church, about a mile from Orary. Preached & baptized several children. After sermon a man came & told me, of his own accord, that he was a great sinner, & wished to have somebody sent to him to instruct him. I rejoiced to hear, for the first time, a spontaneous declaration of this kind from an Indian, & pointed out to him our all-sufficient Saviour. His name is Olivoo, i.e. Splendor. I wish I may hereafter have an opportunity to give a good account of him.

8th Went on to Marracundel, another christian village near the sea, where I preached

* New converts

preached, baptised some children, & requested Meyminam, a worthy catechist from Tanjore, to take care of the congregation at Orary ad interim. There are some promising young men at this place, who might easily be trained for teachers. I proceeded from hence to Nagaledy, another christian village of the same description. Daniel, a steady young man from Tanjore seminary, is here, as well as many fine boys that can read & write. Nothing would be more easy than to form a seminary in this country. In the evening proceeded inland to Sodador, but did not like the aspect of the congregation.

Visited the Temindar, a Mahometan, in his garden, who politely sent me a present of pomegranates & cocoa-nuts. The former very soon cured me of a slight fit of the bile. By the moon-light I took a lonely walk in the woods, where I met a poor heathen, with whom I discoursed & prayed. They in general do not object to our religion, but say that theirs embraces the same object under different forms. This I followed for a moment, but asked, whether he had ever heard, that the great God from heaven he professed to worship, became man, & died for his sins? I hope some impression was made upon his mind.

9th. Being Lord's day, I preached at Sodador on 2 Cor. VI, 2 baptised some children, & those elders, and then set out (going v.b.) for Bethlehem, where I arrived about sun-set. Marydavarayesham preached, & I prayed & baptised children. On my road hither, I passed several congregations which are thickly scattered in the woods hereabouts.

10th. Crossed over to Moodaloor, & preached on Psalm 34th, v. 6. baptised children, & prayed with a sick woman, who came to me, saying the Indian doctor (Ami!) had persuaded her that her disease, baffling all his skill, was owing to the wrath of Koorumaur, or missionaries. In the evening after a long march through thickets & briars, & afterwards over red hills, arrived at Jerusalem, where my presence was required. Prayed & catechised.

11th. Spoke upon John X, 17, chose & blessed elders, but under much fear, the Lord alone can read the human heart. Heard many complaints, & ordered a notorious cow-stealer, who had applied for baptism, & given rise to many complaints, to be expelled from the settlement, & then set out for Nazareth, which again struck me pleasingly as a mansion of peace.

12th. At five in the morning, obliged (according to the custom of the country,) the head watchman to give a bill to the amount of all the articles, which had been stolen, for some years past. He willingly gave it, but only paid part of it. This is a pernicious custom: the watchman being sure to pray for every theft, is tempted, to reimburse himself by nefarious means. At six set out for Palamcatta, where after another fall with

10) with my little horse, I arrived late in the evening.

I think I made no less than an hundred miles in this tour, & a great part of it on foot.

Palamcottah. If I have been too particular hitherto, it is in order to give the brethren at home some idea of the Mission here. Henceforth I shall be more concise in my accounts & if they are not spiritual enough, it is perhaps owing to my little knowledge of the language. I cannot yet converse fluently with the natives & often do not understand what they say; consequently I am not yet authorized to give a just opinion as to the real state of Christ's kingdom in this country: but certainly it is a remarkable work of God in providence & which may in future ~~ages~~ give us abundant cause to praise him.

From March 13th to 22d. Wrote many letters & settled many troublesome affairs. One letter was to a kind friend resident at Travancore to whom I had been recommended, applying for a passport; and I soon received a very encouraging answer, and ~~£~~ a kind offer to bear the expenses of my journey to Cochin, if I had no objection to go so far. Accordingly, I resolved upon the journey.

In the course of those days, I also wrote an address to the protestant public at Madras & on the Coromandel coast, requesting them to support me in my plans for the Tinnevely mission, by a subscription. This I sent to Mr Loveless, to have it printed and dispersed.

In the mean time service, with daily morning & evening prayer was carried on, as usual, in the church at this place, but no fruit, however, has appeared as yet.

As a circumstance that will be pleasing to the society, I beg leave to mention, that on the 28th, a Romish missionary, who travels in this country, sent me a present of yams by his catechist, with a polite message. Who would not rejoice at such liberal sentiments?

April 3d. Being Thursday, before Easter, was celebrated as usual in the different established churches, when I preached on the sufferings of our Saviour in Mount Olivet. Nallapen preached in English & Tamul.

5th. Held a preparatory meeting with the small English flock of communicants.

6th. On this day, the Easter service was performed, & the sacrament of the Lord's supper dispensed in both languages.

7th, to 12th. Settled all affairs preparatory to my journey into Travancore.

Travancore. Prepared my diary for the information of ^{N.}
the society, which however, owing to several providences ^{was not sent}
in the course of these days, a worthy gentleman presented me with
a small horse, for which I was very thankful.

13th Set out with four or five people for Travancore. I
first took a course through those parts of the mission alrea-
dy mentioned, & waited on some friends in Manapar, Tirut-
thandar, & Allmartirunavelly, preaching to the congrega-
tion, that came in my way, & after having passed a week
in this manner, struck off towards the mountains to the
southwest.

23d. I reached Samariaburam. Here too are several
fine basps that read & write. A Samaer had fallen that day
from a palmyra-tree & fractured several bones. I found him
senseless in a little hut. When he came to himself, I prayed
with him, & he declared, he would lay hold of Jesus, and not
let him go. He soon after died.

24th. Set out, after morning prayer, and passed a congrega-
tion, I think Vantenculam; the heat was tremendous. In the
dusk of the evening arrived at Wadekkenkulam, one of the
westernmost churches, seven or eight miles from the hills. We had
evening prayer & catechisation in a very small clay-built
church. About 30 protestants here, but many catholics, who
are inimical. Two men expressed their desire to be baptized,
& gave proper reasons for it, whom I promised to gratify
the next time I came there, if I found them fit subjects.

25th. Set out at dawn & made that passage through the hills,
which is called the Arambuley gaut, about noon. The coun-
try adjoining is almost uninhabited, owing, I suppose, to the
violent gales from the gaut. Yet there are marks of former &
even of late cultivation.

As soon as we had entered the gaut, the grandest prospect
of green-clad precipices, cloud-clapt mountains, hills
adorned with temples & castles, & other picturesque objects,
presented themselves. A noble avenue of immense baobab-
trees, winding through the valley, adds greatly to the beauty
of the place. My timid companions, however, trembled at
every step, being now on ground altogether in the power of
the Bramins

12. The Bramins, the sworn enemy of the christian name: & indeed, a little occurrence soon convinced us, that we were no more on British territory. I laid down to rest in a caravansary, appropriated for Bramins only, when the magistrate immediately sent word for me to remove, otherwise their god would no more eat! I reluctantly obeyed & proceeded round the southern hills to a village called Magilandy, from whence formerly two men came to Tranquebar to request me to come & see them, representing that two hundred heathens at this place were desirous to embrace our religion. I lodged two days at their house, when I preached and prayed; some of them knew the catechism. They begged hard for a native teacher, but declared they could not build a church, as all this country had been given by the king of Travancore to the Bramins, in consequence of which, the magistrates would not give them permission. I spent here the Lord's day, for the first time very uncomfortably, in an Indian hut, in the midst of a noisy, gaping crowd, which filled the house. Perhaps my disappointment contributed to my unpleasant feelings; I had expected to find hundreds eager to listen to the word, instead of which, I had a difficulty to make a few families attend for an hour.

On Monday a catechist from a neighbouring congregation arriving to speak with me, I committed this infant flock to his charge, & he is to come once a week to see them: I sent him to the magistrate with a request no more to persecute the christians at Magilandy, and he gave a very favourable answer. Travelling pleasantly under the shade of trees across hill & dale, with the ever-varying prospect of the gauts on my right, I reached Tiruvandireem, the capital of Travancore, on the 30th of April. On the road I stopped, as travellers in general do, at Roman catholic churches. Finding the dialect spoken here differing from the pure Tamil as much as the Yorkshire dialect does from pure English, I was much at a loss to understand them, and make myself understood. However, I addressed them as opportunity offered, individually, lamenting, that the man, whom I had taken along with me to assist me, gave himself over to drunkenness, and therefore was of little use. Tiruvandireem lies at the foot of the hills, two miles from the sea, in a sandy plain near the small river Aramaney, buried in cocoa-butt plantations. It consists of an inconsiderable fort, in a ruinous state, with straggling suburbs, and has nothing of royal grandeur. It contains

Copy of the Revd. M. Bingley's Diary
contains, however, a palace and three pagodas, which we were not suffered to enter. I conversed with several officers in the king's service, native Portuguese, who wished for a missionary to settle among them; one of them seemed particularly well-inclined & to him I gave an English Bible. He complained much of the exertions of the Roman missionaries at funerals, baptisms, &c.

May 1st Set off for Alenjo, the most ancient English possession in Travancore. I was struck with the number of handsome Romish churches along the beach; at every thousand yards there is a church, & there were formerly still more. They are mostly built by private persons in consequence of some vow or other; but no inference is to be drawn from the number of these churches with regard to the flourishing state of religion. In most of them, mass is performed only once in two years.

I will take this opportunity to give my opinion on the number of Roman Catholics in the peninsula of India. I know, from good authority, that there are beyond a thousand missionaries dispersed over the country. If we allow each of them a nominal influence on two or three thousand souls, as is not improbable, it brings the number of Roman Catholics to between two & three millions. Those that are well-informed, think my calculation falls short of the truth.

This is the work of three centuries. Could we suppose their religion will go on to spread in the same ratio, we might fix the period, humanly speaking, when India would be a Roman Catholic country! It is true, that at the outset, the missionaries were abundantly zealous & powerfully seconded by government; the archbishop of Goa was governor-general of the Portuguese possessions; money was sent from Europe in considerable sums. Circumstances are now altered, but the resources of the Romish priests in this country, are still considerable: fines, indulgences, fees, presents, masses for the dead, are inexhaustible sources.

At Alenjo I was introduced to the acquaintance of Father Raymond Piedmontese, & vicar-general of Veraples. He is a man of uncommon liberal principles, & what I learned from him amounts to this: at Veraples they have two numerous seminaries; one for the Latin the other for the Syriac students. So late as in April the bishop of — came down to Veraples (the vicar-general's confirmation to the bishopric having not yet arrived from Rome, the French having taken the ship in which it was coming, he cannot obtain,) in order to lay hands on a number of young priests, no less than 63; besides whom, 200 missionaries

184 missionaries of different degrees were ordained in the course of that month. Under Father Raymond's care are fifty thousand of the Syrian church and sixty thousand of the Latin church. There are, besides the archbishop of Goa, four Romish bishops on this coast. The united Syrians differ in nothing but the language made use of in public worship from the church of Rome. They were originally brought into that communion by compulsive measures. A few churches, of which more hereafter, resisted unto blood. The inquisition at Goa, of course, is now very mild. Father Raymond enjoys great regard from government, on account of his vast influence. The subsidies they draw from the congregation de propaganda fide, at Rome, amounts only to twelve hundred rupees per annum.

I met here two European soldiers, that seem to have something of daring life in their hearts, & whose walk is no disgrace to Christians. It is a pleasure to see God's children scattered every where.

3d After crawling & climbing for a day and a half along shore, reached Dulion, near which are the British head-quarters. At Dulion got acquainted with an old Dutch officer, from Brunswick, who is a good & religious man.

4th Had Tamil service with some straggling Christians and my coolies, to the number of twelve. The former were of M^r. Schwarze's converts. Among the soldiers there are said to be ten or twelve more, but I could not make them come. Baptized two children. Here are five Roman churches. The place uncommonly pleasant.

5th Embarked in a canoe made of a single tree, four feet in diameter. Here the great backwater begins, which favours an inland navigation for 120 miles, & is connected with many rivers descending from the hills. It opens in various places into the ocean, from which it is separated by a spit of land thrown up by the sea.

6th After having passed several canals, partly natural, partly artificial, intersecting a low marshy country, resembling Holland, arrived at Alleppe.

8th After another journey through canals, reached Cochin. This town extends along the south side of its spacious & excellent harbour. In this harbour are many pleasant islands, on one of which Colonel — resides, in a hermit like situation. This worthy gentleman's goodness & condescension towards me exceeded my warmest expectations, & can only be accounted for by the Lord having inspired his heart to favour the missionary cause with all his might. Indeed I was overcome with gratitude in considering the merciful providence of finding a man at the head of the British in Travancore, whose conviction of Christian truth

truth is so strong, & his real so determined. I know, it would be painful to his delicate feelings, if I had said more on the subject, and shall, on this occasion I account, refrain from making any further observations on his conduct in the course of a few days I had the happiness to spend under his roof.

Soon after my arrival, he procured me an opportunity of visiting the synagogue of the Jews, in one of the suburbs of Cochin, which being the only one in India, has been the subject of much curious inquiry in Europe. The congregation consists at present of about a thousand souls, five hundred of which are descendants of white Jews; the rest are black. Mr. Alex. Jacob Levy, a Jew born in London, officiates as presiding rabbin. He told me they had a tradition, that these Jews were of the tribe of Benjamin, who, after the conquest of Jerusalem by Titus, escaped with the silver trumpets and other implements, from the temple and settled in Arabia, from whence they came gradually down the coast to Crangamore & other places, till a persecution by the Portuguese took place, in which their antiquities, documents, &c. were all destroyed, when they took refuge in the dominions of the king of Cochin. They were formerly, more rich & numerous, but since the last war, reduced to poverty they now subsist by the produce of their coconut gardens. This tradition, as to their emigration from Jerusalem, is obviously involved in uncertainty. The truth seems to be, that trade allowed their ancestors into India at an early period, as well as into Persia, Arabia &c.; & then being persecuted by the Roman Catholics they finally retired to Cochin, from the different quarters, where they had at first settled.

They have several deeds, the most antique said to be nine hundred years old, engraved on a plate of brass. These, however, contain nothing but grants from several kings to settle under their protection. Colonel — is in possession of authentic copies of them all, & they will no doubt, be given to the public in due time. It is curious, that the Portuguese accounts concerning their occupation of India make no mention whatever of Jewish colonies. The synagogue at Cochin is a snug little building, in the style of a Dutch synagogue, illuminated by sixteen massive lustres of silver. As far as manuscripts, they have none. Their thora or law, is written in the usual modern characters, & has been sent out from Europe.

These are all the remarkable circumstances I could learn; but as the Rev. & learned Dr. Buchanan from Calcutta is on his way to Cochin, his researches will be more gratifying to the public. I shall

dismiss

16. dismiss this subject, with noticing a curious custom, that prevails among them: if two young people of different sexes, in the presence of two witnesses, divide & eat a piece of bread, fruit or any other morsel, with each other, they are considered as lawfully married. Something similar to this prevails all over the East. To eat or drink any thing, in this way, produces the closest union of interests; & to drink tamarind water with a boy out of the same cup, constitutes the ceremony of adopting him. See 1 Cor. X, 16. 17.

During my stay at Malgat, the island where Colonel — resides, I had an opportunity of seeing a dignitary of the Syriac Church. His dress consisted of a plain long frock, of black silk, a small blue bonnet & a long bishop's staff in his hand. His physiognomy differed much from that which characterizes the Indian; austerity, firmness, acumen & integrity, seemed to form its character. He looked like a man. The Syriacs came into India, he said, more than a thousand years ago. Their tenets were those held by the Nestorians, who during their severe persecutions, (the storms that scatter the seeds of opinion,) spread all over the East. The Syriacs, numerous at present, go by name of Nasirins, or Nazarenes. They are an industrious, moral & wealthy branch of the community, & are greatly respected in all commercial intercourse for their integrity. The greater part of them have been induced, by compulsion, to join the pale of the church of Rome. They are quite Roman Catholics, with this exception, that mass is performed among them in Syriac instead of Latin. They have the New Testament in Syriac, & a seminary of their own at Veraples, near Cochin. Under the bishop of Veraples, are said to be no less than fifty thousand souls, who hold community with the church of Rome. Two branches of the Syriac Church, however, create schism: First, Those in the hills to the north, forming about thirty-two churches, who braved the persecutions of the Portuguese, adhere to their old heterodox tenets concerning the two natures in Christ & receive the sacrament in both kinds. Secondly, About fifty-two churches in the south fell off again from the Romish church, when the persecution ceased, retaining, however, most of the peculiarities of the catholic worship. On what principle they split, I cannot learn. All these churches worship saints, & especially the Virgin Mary.

Cochin, once a fine compact town, presents now a ruinous

ruinous aspect. The fortifications have been blown up, as ~~well~~ have all the public buildings. The inhabitants languish, as there are no schools, no public worship, & no trade.

On the 12th, I left Col. — a hospitable roof, with his kind promise, that he would, at any rate, procure me an order from the king of Travancore, allowing me to build a church, annexing the offer of the money required for this purpose. With a most grateful sense for all his kindness, I stepped into my boat, praising the Lord for all his goodness. Colonel — strongly persuaded me, to fix myself near him at Cochin, or at least at no great distance, in order to give me his helping hand on every occasion. But enticing as this offer was, I declined it, in consideration of my engagements, & the calls of duty in the Finevelly mission.

13th In the morning reached Alapully, or Alappze, formerly fortified, & still a place of trade. Some of the king's troops are quartered here, & a few European gentlemen reside at this place for the purposes of trade. The land gains so fast upon the sea hereabouts, that a ship which had been begun about five years ago to be built close to the water's edge, is now at the distance of 500 paces from the sea.

In the evening I saw an instance of Roman catholic church discipline. Taking a walk with a gentleman, we heard a woman cry very much, as if under a severe flogging. Having followed these sounds, we perceived, in front of a church, a young woman, tied to a cocoa-nut tree, and a stout fellow, (the church-clerk,) inflicting this severe discipline, whilst the native priest stood by to see that justice was done. By our appearance the priest was moved to put a stop to the execution. In that system, which the Roman missionaries have adopted, where all manner of offences are tried by them, such punishments may sometimes be necessary for grosser crimes. We dare say, if the woman had possessed the means of pacifying the priest, confession and absolution would have been all that was needful on this occasion. The following day I proceeded on my journey, and dined

(18) at a hut belonging to a family of Canarines. They wear the Bramin thread over their shoulder, & their language is the Grandam or modern Sanscrit. Their features also are of the Braminic cast. From this coincidence, it seems to be plain, that the Bramin came originally from the Canara country, in the heart of the peninsula, from whence they brought their superstitions and their language. It can not be thought, that they would suffer the Canarines to wear their distinguishing badge, had they not sprung from a Canarine stock. The family I visited, were Roman Catholics, & I observed in their hut tables & benches, & a piece of furniture of which other Indians know not the use: I also saw two very simple bucket-wheels, to throw water from the rice lands into a canal. Here too and only here, I saw the people cut boards and planks by means of a saw, as we do in Europe.

15th I arrived again at Quilon, where I waited on Col. — and some of the officers. In the evening of this day was introduced by Dr. —, nephew to the colonel, to his excellency the Dewan. At this interview, I requested him to give me leave, to build a church at Magilandy for the Christians. He asked me. "Of what religion are you?" Of that ~~the~~ Colonel is — is. "I never knew, that there was such a religion." I endeavoured to explain to him what it was, but with little success. He told me frankly, the thing was not to be done, as it was an innovation. But as I had Colonel —'s promise, that he would get me leave to build a church, I was not much alarmed, but took my leave. Soon after this, Colonel — repeated his promise by letter, and requested his excellency the minister to come and see him, which was done accordingly. I mention this fact to show how impossible it would be to introduce the mission into Travancore in opposition to the Bramins and Roman priests, if the present favourable moment had been slipped. The Dewan is a man of great sense, and resolution. At the late rebellion he stood at the head of the rebel

rebel party, as it is called: (Cf. my vol in van 19
hundred against the rebel party in the island.)
This day I was requested by a Roman catholic lady of great
influence, to baptize her youngest daughter, & to admit her
eldest daughter a member of the protestant church. Her
general argument, after much discussion, amount-
ed to this, that though for her own part she knew
and discriminated the essentials of religion, yet she con-
ceived, that her daughters were in great danger, if
brought up in the Roman catholic persuasion, which in
this country was frequently the object of just ridicule,
as certainly it appeared very often as a piece of pious
buffoonery. Her daughters might probably be married
to protestants, & they might be reared out of all religion
if they embraced that of the church of Rome. I thought
very seriously & deeply on this subject, & laid the matter
before the Lord in prayer, & after giving it due re-
flection, was resolved to stay a fortnight at Quilon,
in order to give these amiable children, as they really
were, some instruction, which might enable them to
make their own choice. Accordingly, I began my in-
structions with the three children, one of them a most en-
gaging, but almost blind youth, the son of a Dutch
governor at Cochin. I was rejoiced to find my
scholars prove susceptible of gracious impressions, which
I hope will never be obliterated. Of three successive
Sundays we had divine service in English, and having
confirmed the two eldest children on the day previous,
we all partook of the Lord's supper. The Lord was near
to our hearts, & those my dear friends, who overwhelmed
me with kindness, promised, at parting, that they would
regularly keep divine service on the Lord's day; a pro-
mise which, I am happy to learn, has since been con-
scientiously fulfilled. I am truly thankful to the Lord
for

20 For this happy fortnight, and have some hopes, that the good boy above mentioned will one day make an useful, though perhaps blind missionary, in the Travancore country, and Malegalam language.

Although the rainy season had now set in, the Lord, in his mercy, gave me a whole week of fine weather for my return towards home, and the contrary would have been distressing in the extreme. I travelled with all speed, and arrived, July 4th at Myengo.

On the 5th, in the morning partook of the Lord's supper with three communicants, one of them an amiable English servant, who was abundantly thankful, & in the evening arrived at Sonterri, where an old Portuguese Gentleman, in the service of the king, gave me a great deal of information on the religious and political state of Travancore.

On the 7th, at Cyacotta, I was mercifully preserved from being killed by a falling palm branch, an hair-breadth escape! Here I was informed, that the catechist, I had taken with me, after a deal of bad conduct, unknown to me, had absconded with some of my money and clothes. This was very unpleasant, as I wanted him much in the capacity of an interpreter, being desirous of obtaining a piece of land in the south part of Travancore: but as this poor creature, on my first coming into these parts, had done me essential service, never to be forgotten; I felt more inclined to pity than resentment. His abilities are great, & may still, some time hence, be useful, if the Lord in mercy should grant him repentance.

10th Reached my present home full of gratitude to God our Saviour for prospering my way.

I shall conclude my diary, with stating the present circumstances of the mission, and the views, which I beg leave to suggest to our directors for advancing & promoting the cause of genuine and spiritual religion in these extensive regions.

When I got home, a collection, amounting to 90 star pagodas, £30 enabled me to make some necessary repairs and improvements

improvements to the mission church. We had morning & evening prayer and on Sundays divine service, both in Tamul and English, was attended to, as soon as the repairs were finished; & I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the few ladies & gentlemen residing here, for the encouragement they were pleased to give me. May the Lord reward them by giving them saving discoveries of his grace.

The English service is in general attended by 20 to 25 hearers; the Tamul congregation amounts to about the same number. Since my return I have made five excursions into the country, to visit the different congregations, and the aggregate of my travels will amount to between four and five hundred English miles. These tours, though expensive and cheerless, are needful, but nothing worth mentioning has happened in the course of them. I must notice however my journey to Tuttaconry, between the 17th & 23rd of August. I had some conversation with a singular but truly pious character, at that place, the Rev. Mr. Cleaver Dutch Minister, which the Lord ~~in~~ sanctified to a powerful revival of grace in my own heart. It was, indeed, a time of refreshment from the Lord in the time of drought. I desire to make good use of these favours.

In the interval, I received important letters from various quarters. Several of them inform me, that the little flock of youths, lately under my care at Tranquebar, now superintended by my worthy friend Schreyvogel, goes on steadily, though we have to lament the threat of excommunication by the new Romish priest, has scared away (verjagt) the Roman catholic Brethren.

Being, as yet, unable to understand the dialect of this province, & having no means whatever to distinguish proper subjects for baptism, I gave the power of baptizing (as is sometimes done) to two worthy catechists, Meynimen and Abraham, and between three and four hundred adults have been baptized.

Letters from our directors, and others from my parents and family, the Lord sent me in the most critical hour, and they proved blessings never to be forgotten. Others from my worthy Brothers Crain & Des Granges were equally encouraging.

Upon the whole, every thing in the country seems to draw to a favourable crisis.

The Dewan of Travancore sent me word, that if I dispatched one of our Christians to him, he would give me leave to build a church at Magilandy. Accordingly I shall send in a short time. For this important service our Society is indebted alone to Colonel —, without whose determined & fearless interposition, none of their

22) Their missionaries would have been able to set a foot in that country.

I formerly mentioned, that I had taken two youths into a course of preparation for the ministry. They promise well, & when engaged with them, my heart is at rest. I maintain them out of my allowance; and wish for nothing more ardently, than to be enabled, by some means or other, to begin a more numerous seminary. But hitherto I have not had the means. I am also sorry, that my journeys too frequently break into my engagements at home. But this will soon be over.

If to all these things I add, that the Lord preserves my health in spite of some fatigue, and much vexation; and has procured me here, not only an early field of usefulness, but also an excellent opportunity of collecting experience towards the management of a great missionary concern in these lands, and exercising my beginning powers of utterance among friendly people, whom I may ~~often~~ address without fear of being heard, I have laid before you the mercies I enjoy.

The scene of this mission lies in the south of the peninsula, & within the triangle between Palamcottah, Tuttaconry, and the gaut of Travancore, called the Trambuly gaut. The chief branch of it embraces a numerous part of the Sander tribes, a people who live from the produce of the palmyra-trees.

On the principle, then, that whosoever professes to believe Jesus as God and Saviour is to be baptized, this mission has hitherto been conducted. In general, however, it is expected of the candidates for baptism, (*synn ymman myllyf, sin, I myllyf mynysym,*) that they should know by heart the creed, the Lord's prayer, the words implying the institution of the two sacraments by Christ, and that the children, at least, born in the congregation, should know these by rote. Thus we have a little wheat mixed with a great proportion of tares, as in other places; yet I have sometimes, though but seldom, heard short & feeling prayers, and caught, occasionally, a sigh that came from the heart. Upon enquiry, I find, that out of many professors, there are but few, that walk under the influence of the gospel; yet I firmly believe, that the doctrine of salvation becomes more & more lively in the hearts of those, who might at first have embraced it from unworthy motives, especially at the approach of that admirable watchman Death! And did not the Lord's apostles themselves follow him, at first, from selfish motives, having worldly grandeur and personal profit in view? Yet the Lord did not forbid them to be baptized, on this

on this account, but bare with them for a good & great purpose. (23)

Thus, in asserting, that the generality of the new converts have been induced to embrace our religion from inferior motives at first; such as a lawsuit; an oppression, some hoped for advantage, a severe sickness, and the influence or example of relatives; it must still be allowed that the work is a great work of God in providence and the ultimate consequences are highly desirable. These people no longer worship stocks and stones and devils, but the God of heaven:— they have heard of an all-sufficient Saviour & this may be turned to a good account. They get a few just notions of moral duties; & I am far from thinking, that among other motives for their becoming christians, the reasonableness of our worship, & the idea of a Saviour from sin, does ^{not} weigh at all with them. These slight convictions will, I hope, strengthen with many of them in time, and end well.

The tribe of Sanarons is very numerous both here & in Travancore. In the latter country they are called Teers, & I do not know if these resemble in all respects our Sanarons. In this district I compute them to be at least fifty thousand in number, of which, perhaps, five thousand belong to our protestant church, and constitute from forty to fifty congregations, under the care of about 30 native teachers. A few of the latter (perhaps 8 or 10) are rather respectable servants of God as far as their knowledge goes. But the greater part have been enlisted in a hurry from among the Sanarons themselves, reading & writing being the only quality required. From these catechists, and their base deceitful & unworthy conduct, my worst troubles arise. But, till a seminary for forming better ones is established in these parts, the evil must be borne with, & the only thing I can do, is to keep them in awe. It is also to be lamented, that many of them receive too little wages. If they have families, they can scarcely afford to buy a little palm-ya sugar to satisfy the cravings of nature. My heart bleeds for them in this respect, for this extreme poverty often prompts them to take bribes & presents to do what they should not.

Persecution, in the proper sense of the word, has not occurred since my arrival. Those oppressions & extortions before mentioned, when the falling christians have been represented as persecution; but it is certain that heathens, Mahometans and Roman catholics, suffer more by them than our christians; so much so, that sometimes the former offer money, & use other means, to obtain the protection of the missionary. But all these, it is reported, will soon be done away by a fixed rate of taxes.

It would be a measure dictated by justice & humanity, to keep Pinguins aloof

24 aloof from every office, in which oppression can possibly be exercised. They are so exquisitely cunning, that their tricks can seldom be developed to their superiors, who otherwise never fail to give redress. What a pity, that these impostors should swallow up one fourth part of the revenue of India! What would not have been the effect, if one hundredth part of this immense sum had been devoted to the spreading of our holy faith! Nor is there a stronger tie to connect the people so unconnected by the nature of their castes, & cement the basis of a government managed by foreigners, than that of one common faith. Twenty or thirty Christian seminaries, like those at Tranquebar & Tanjore, would have wrought great things in India.

I consider myself however bound in conscience to decline taking any part of the established mission into my hands. Our brethren at home, not hearing any account of a work of God in the hearts of the converts, would soon be discouraged. I would by no means have this interpreted as a disparagement of the existing mission; I hope, in one shape or other God's own finger will appear.

My plan is as follows:

1. A small congregation to be begun near the confines of Travancore: £100 to be devoted to buying ground, & erecting necessary buildings.
2. A seminary of 12 youths, drawn from the existing congregations, to be formed: a pagoda & a half to be allowed for every youth per month, viz. 12 s.
3. When prepared, these youths to be sent out two & two, as itinerants, & two pagodas per month allowed as their stipend.
4. If some of these prove very successful, & are truly gracious subjects, they should be ordained; but previous to this they should take a solemn oath, not to exercise their ministry but in such a way, as shall be approved by the church.
5. These to form an annual synod, under the presidency of an European missionary. Thus they will be gradually taught to govern a church with prudence & wisdom, which catechists never learn at present.
6. If any congregation wishes for a stationary preacher, one of these ministers to be given them, & they to stipulate to maintain him.
7. A printing press to be united with the institution.
8. Baptism to be administered ^{only} over a true confession of sin & a belief in God our Saviour appears, a promise to be exacted, that such persons will be ready to suffer persecution for Christ, if necessary.
9. A closer union & communion to be established among real converts, by means of a frequent enjoyment of the Lord's supper, granted only to such.

These are the outlines of my plan. Its expense would not exceed £200 per annum. A more effectual one I cannot devise. It would, among other advantages, throw into our hands some youths, who, after a little preparation, may be usefully employed in establishing Christianity almost independently of European missionaries & supplies in case other missionaries cannot be soon found. Should this old mission be long without an European, to keep in order, it may rapidly increase in numbers but will certainly ~~lose~~ lose the grand essentials of a Christian church, for which we all should be heartily sorry.

Dear brethren, pray for me. let me have your advice, which I shall always scrupulously follow, if possible; and if you should think proper to send out Perathon Inadan, let him be taught printing, minting & book-binding.

I commend you all to the grace of God. We will quietly and steadily go on. The Lord is at hand. If we do not conquer, it will still be pleasant & happy to have fought and fallen in his battles. Thus, I remain ever, dear brethren in the Lord, your humble and obedient servant

Salematta Sept. 12, 1806.

W. T. Ringeltaube