Chapter 9

Dictionary
CATURAKARATHI

(Dictionary of high Tamil)

The well-known caturakarati was composed in 1732 as the title in Latin mentions: "Thesaurus linguae tamulicae ad pleniorem planioremque scriptorum tamulensium in telligentiam collegit, ac quatuor in partes digestit Constantius Josephus Beschius E Societate Jesu in regno Madurensi Missionarius ad usum ejusdem societatis Missionariorum. A.D.M. DCC.XXII." At the end of the dictionary there is a small poem entitled in some editions as ஐதாவாகி இலங்கை which states that the book was written in the Salivahana year 1648 and the Christian era 1732.¹

It may be new to some to know that Caturakarati was meant to be a dictionary of high Tamil, the literary Tamil as found in books. Already in 1728 when he wrote his Latin grammar for common Tamil, Beschi promised in its preface to give a grammar and lexicon for high Tamil.² And in his preface to Caturakarati he remembers that promise and adds "now I fulfill my promise late but with good will; for besides the lexicon of common Tamil (which in 1728 must have been in preparation) in which I explain some words in Latin, French and Portuguese, here over and above I give a dictionary where is unfolded the changing manifold force and power of all words as they are mostly used by the writers of high Tamil."³
Later in the preface to the dictionary of Common Tamil he mentions the same idea while vindicating the fact of giving two dictionaries separately for the two kinds of Tamil.

"The Tamil language has a double dialect; the one is called koduntamil (common Tamil), the other sentamil (higher Tamil). These differ among themselves as much as Latin is different from, say Portuguese. Now although there are many common words in Latin and Portuguese, not on that account has anyone so far dreamt of giving in one vocabulary the words of these languages mixed up. Likewise I did not think it praiseworthy to put together the words of common Tamil along with those of higher dialect. Therefore concerning sentamil I have already given separately a dictionary and synonym; in it I have explained the words of higher Tamil by means of common Tamil, as if I were to explain Latin words by means of say Portuguese words." 4

This preface brings out clearly the role of the grammar and the dictionary in the study of a foreign language. In grammar the first and the important step is given namely to give the rules of any art arranged in an order; in the dictionary are given the material and the instruments with which the rules of grammar could be put in practice. "What colours are for painters, what weapons are for soldiers, what lime, stones and other materials are for builders, that certainly are words to the students of a foreign language. Therefore I consider myself to have rendered no service although I have written at length about the common and the high Tamil dialect, unless
I have given an abundance of words by means of dictionaries. This as well as the other two dictionaries were intended for the use of foreign missionaries. Whereas the other two explain words in languages other than Tamil (Latin, French, and Portuguese, which were known to the student-missionaries, this does not use any other language but Tamil. The reason, as stated by Beschi, is that it should, besides being useful to missionaries profit natives too. "That it may serve the indigenous people, I explain Tamil words in Tamil, but in such a way that in the explanation I have used, as far as it was allowed, the common words of the ordinary Tamil and where I intend to give synonyms and paraphrases I do so in the ordinary terms. This method will not prove useless, in my opinion, to Europeans, for anyone ignorant of the common language should not, I think, approach the higher Tamil by leap and jump."

The Grammar of common Tamil had employed new signs to identify consonants and to avoid confusions in orthography between short e, short o and long e, long o. To extend the clarity further Beschi "would add to letters the sign (called Kombu) to signify short and inflect it on top to signify long. e.g., கண் - கண், கண்ண - கண்ண.

How Beschi prepared this dictionary, what sources he consulted would be impossible for us to imagine unless he told us. And he does tell us that to know the force and power of words of this higher Tamil, which is said to be a dead language, he had recourse not to the living language but to the stability
of ancient tones. "With greater diligence than I could
ordinarily I went through the books of ancient authors -
tinakaram, nikandu, pinkalantai, uricol, kaikadi etc., all
of which are synonyms, not dictionaries. Besides, I took
care studiously to read the best commentators of those authors;
and as through the negligence of copyists many errors have
crept in, I have compared various manuscripts with one another.
Finally has many words have been brought from the Sanskrit
language, I read with the accuracy Sanskrit authors and tried,
according to the norms of truth, to mend the mistakes that
crept in casually and drawing from the same treasury as many
words as possible endeavoured to enrich this treasure still
more." One might question whether such a dictionary of high
Tamil which was a key to poetry was going to be useful to
foreign missionaries whose chief duty was to preach religion.
The answer is given by Beschi at the end of his preface. In
these parts, says he, the works on the gods, the fables, rules
of different disciplines, songs of poets, astronomical calcu-
lation, laws of medicine, music and dancing, in fine, everything
even the rudiments of grammar have been written by ancients in
the higher language. Hence, if one is totally ignorant of
this language, he cannot know thoroughly and beyond doubt any-
thing about their gods, their fables, their arts and sciences:
Then one must depend on natives who......... in order not to
confess their ignorance will examine unhesitatingly bombastic
words and pronounce ex cathedra stretches of imagination as the
official doctrine. How false were their statements are
will become clear when we read their ancient authors. A missionary who wants to prove anything apodictically to Indians cannot convince by means of arguments from reason which the common people will brush aside as false and imaginative; it is by means of citations from ancient books that anything can be proved. "And as Indians assent to authority more than to reason the method of convincing any one beyond doubt is to bring forward the writings of the ancients. And in these writings the ancient Tamils have appropriately spoken of God and virtue. And what will you be able to effect if you are completely ignorant of the higher Tamil in which everything is written down?"  

The second part of this dictionary was the first to be printed in 1819 by Mr. Ellis helped by Thiruchitrambala Iyer. The whole Caturakarati was published in 1824 by order of Mr. Richard Clarke, Director of the College at Madras, under the supervision of Thandavaraya Mudaliar and Ramachandra Kavirayer who revised the manuscript and added a supplement to each section. A second edition of it was published in 1835 by Rev. J. Smith, of the London Missionary Society and in this the supplements were incorporated in their respective divisions. There was a third edition in 1860 (in Public Instruction Press, Madras) under the direction of Percival and with the help of Mr. Visagaperumal Iyer and Ponnambala Mudaliar. In 1928 a fourth edition came out under the supervision of Mr. Krishnaswamy Naidu and published by E.M. Gopalakrishna Kone, Madurai.
These various editions, bearing testimony for the usefulness of Caturakarati, do not allow us to know the exact number of words Beschi had gathered for each section.

CONTENTS:

As the name Caturakarati signifies this dictionary contains four parts. The first part, the dictionary proper, contains words with different meanings; the second synonyms; the third is a glossary of the subordinate species of the technical and general terms of science and literature; the fourth presents words that rhyme fully except in the first syllable, so that they could be used in poetry. Having arranged in these four compartments all the words and their meanings, words and their synonyms, words and their classifications, words and their musical rhymes that the Tamil language possessed in the ancient works, Beschi could proudly say in the preface "therefore I like to call this volume 'Treasure of the Tamil Language'." 10

It is interesting to read Beschi's words about the four sections. "I give (1) the dictionary wherein is unfolded the double and manifold force and power of all words as they are mostly used by writers of high Tamil. (2) Synonyms where I propose mostly the nouns and the explanations of every object given by the same authors. (3) Besides, as many things are in this language expressed by means of numbers, as two good things, three worlds, four citadels, five senses, six tastes,
seven seas, eight mountains and so forth, you will find in the third section the explanations of these things as found among authors here and there. Finally to be of use to poetry, I present in one collection of words which having only the first letter different and with the same syllables and same sound.

The word Tamil is found in the four sections as follows:

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Printed editions of Caturakarati usually assert in their foreward that Caturakarati is just an arrangement of the matter contained in the earlier Tamil dictionaries like Thivakaram, Cutamani etc. Copying such a statement, the Tamil lexicon of the University of Madras remarks: "The first and fourth parts (of Caturakarati) correspond to the eleventh section of such works as nikantu - cutamani; the second part answers to their first ten sections; and the third comprises the matter in the 12th section. Thus it will be seen that Caturakarati is an index-treatment of all the special features of the nikantu works."
Nikantu -Cudamani

The first word is Bakavan, which is given five other meanings:

- பகவன், பகவன், பகவன், பகவன், பகவன்.

The second word, Pakal, is given five meanings:

- பகல், பொன்றி எனவென், பகல், பொன்றி, பகல்.

The third word Makaram has two meanings:

- மகரம், மகரம்.

The fourth word Vazi has three meanings:

- வாழி, வாழி, வாழி.

The fifth word Akam has five meanings:

- அகம், அகம், அகம், அகம்.

The eleventh section

The stanzas have the usual second letter-rhyme of every Tamil words. The special feature of this section is that this rhyme is arranged in the alphabetical order. But it is by no means a rhyming dictionary with full rhymes which aims at supplying full words that rhyme. The first words of the three stanzas are:

1. அகம் 2. அகம் 3. அகம்

Caturakarati

Bakavan in the first part has seven meanings:

- பகவன், பகவன், பகவன், பகவன், பகவன், பகவன், பகவன்.

Pakal gets nine meanings:

- பகல், பொன்றி, பொன்றி, பகல், பகல், பகல், பகல், பகல், பகல்.

Makaram has six meanings:

- மகரம், மகரம், மகரம், மகரம், மகரம், மகரம்.

Vasi has six meanings:

- வாழி, வாழி, வாழி, வாழி, வாழி, வாழி.

Akam has nine meanings:

- அகம், அகம், அகம் (a. அகம் ரொக்கு 2.வேண்டுமது. ஜாத்து ரொக்கு) அகம், அகம், அகம், அகம், அகம்.

The fourth section has two divisions: First the rhyme of short letters (உடன் உடன்) the second that of long letters (உடன் உடன்) and both sections give words that rhyme in all the letters but the first (உடன் உடன்)
First ten sections:

The very first section starts with the names of Gods and the different names of Murukan are sixty in number; the last is "

as its equivalent.

The tenth section begins with "which has 21 synonyms, ends with the word "tattal with three synonyms.

Twelfth section starts with the number 2, ends with the number called "Camuttiram. It has no alphabetical order, has no reference to anything which is one. For number three it enlists 14 objects which are threefold.

These examples may suffice to show that the correspondence of Caturakarati to Nikantu-Cudamani and other such books is nothing more than that of the finalised edifice to which the mountain from its stones were cut.

Second section:

Aravan is given only seventy-two synonyms. Vanavil has Indira-thamnu as its equivalent. Col. has got 31 synonyms. Atattai has 4 synonyms.

Besides enumerating synonyms, the section adds here and there explanatory notes, e.g., under Anai-col, under Yanai.

Third section follows its strict alphabetical order has two references to number one namely:

For number three enlists 39 objects has threefold: and found in Cudamani, e.g.,

These examples may suffice to show that the correspondence of Caturakarati to Nikantu-Cudamani and other such books is nothing more than that of the finalised edifice to which the mountain from its stones were cut.

There is an appendix at the end of the last volume of the Tamil lexicon of the Madras University, which is an interesting and revealing comparative study of two words 'taram' and 'vari', as they occur in all the nikantuus and dictionaries.
beginning with the eighth century Tivakaram and ending with it the Tamil Lexicon. According to Caturakarati (as of 1832) keeps 14 words for Taram and 17 words for Vani; and these words are numerically more than in all the preceding Nikantus and are more intelligible, since the Nikantus contain the meanings in Viruttappa. Therefore to say that Caturakarati is an index-treatment of all the special features of the nikantu works is to forget the nature of both and the special contribution of Caturakarati towards understanding more literary words more easily and the help it gives towards composing verses.
NOTAS

1. Lo quæris, o amicus, quae est quæstio? Quæ est veritatis? Quæ Hodie? Quæ Postera?

2. Beschi, auctorium praefatio - Grammatica Latino - Tamulica, in qua de vulgari Tamulicae Linguae idiomate dicto, sumpsimus tractatum. "De sublimi linguæ dialecto in posteriorum, Deo favente, Grammaticam daturum et Lexicon, hic de aspero sive vulgari Tamulicae Linguae idiomate tatum loquar".

3. Beschi, praefatio caturakarat: "sero nunc quidem, sed cum favore promissa reddo, siquidem praetor vulgaris linguæ Lexicon, ubi quaslibet dictiones Latine, Gallice ad Lusitana explico, hic insuper (i) Dictionarium tradò, ubi accepta ac multiplex verborum omnium, prout ab elegantiosis idiomaticis scriptoribus plurumque summuntur, vis ac potestas constabat".


5. Beschi, Praef. Caturakarat

6. Ibid
7. Ibid
8. Ibid
10. Ibid
11. Tamil Lexicon published under the authority of the University of Madras, Volume VI, page XXXVII.

12. Ibid.


(1) மென்கை வரையண் ரோதத்தே என்று... .


15. Fourth Todai Akarati introductory verse.

என்று சொன்ன உரிய முன் கூறும் முன்னூற்று மேல் சொன்னது என்று கூறும் முன்னூற்று மேல்
ஏனை, முன்னூற்று கூறும் என்று கூறும்
மேல் என்று கூறும் முன்னூற்று மேல்

2. FATHER BECCHI'S DICTIONARY OF COMMON TAMIL.

It is well known that Fr. Becchi was the author of Saturakarati; it is not perhaps so well known that he was the author of another dictionary also, viz., the Latin Dictionary of Common Tamil (Vulgaris Tamulicae Linguae Dictionarium Tamulico-Latinum). In the mind of Becchi Saturakarati was to be the dictionary of high Tamil as a supplement to the Grammar of high Tamil and this Latin Dictionary was to be the dictionary of common Tamil as a supplement to the Grammar of common Tamil.

This dictionary of common Tamil was perhaps more dear to Becchi as it was the fruit of his final years and therefore must have cost him more. He was busy with it already in 1732 when his Saturakarati was completed and in the preface to this dictionary of common Tamil he says explicitly that the work was laborious and tedious. He had spent thirty years in the Madurai Mission where Tamil flourished in splendour; what he could acquire through these years, not only by mere practice but by assiduous and unremitting study, that knowledge, it seemed to others, should justly be placed at the service of the common good; but it seemed to him too arduous, as he was an old man broken down by work. In obedience to the orders of the superiors he was forced to get down into the arena, and he boldly put his hand to the work which, started for the greater glory of God, came to an end only by God's special grace, who as He imposed the burden on him so supplied him with strength.
If it can be ascertained when this dictionary, long promised by Beschi, was finalised, we can have an idea as to how long he had been working at it. In his preface to the dictionary he states that he had spent thirty full years in the Madurai Mission. If we take this statement literally, then the preface was written (because the work was over) in 1741, for, as Beschi himself wrote to the General of the Jesuit Order in Rome, he joined the Madurai Mission on 8th May 1711. But there are other evidence both external and internal to make up bring the year of completion to 1743 or 44.

1740 was the year in which Canda Sahib was attacked by Mahrattas in Tiruchirapalli; after many reverses he was obliged to surrender himself and Tiruchirapalli to Ragogi-Bhonsla, the chief of the Mahrattas in 1742. At that time Beschi was in the residence of Tiruchirapalli. Having had much influence with Chanda Sahib, Beschi must have, during the period 1740 - 42, also suffered much. Is it possible to imagine that he was able to complete the difficult work of composing a dictionary during these days of political upheaval in which he and his people were connected? It is more probable that he completed the work during the years that followed the downfall of Chanda Sahib, when he was wisely transferred from Tiruchirapalli to Tuticorin, which was a field outside the Madurai Mission. Though we are not certain whether Beschi continued to be in Tuticorin or went over to
Manapad which was then the head-quarters of the Mission, we can definitely say, with Besse, that it was while on the Fishery Coast (i.e., after 1742) that Beschi gave the final touches to his dictionary of common Tamil. ¹⁰

Besides this external evidence, there is internal evidence pointed out by Fr. Besse, ¹¹ against the word \textit{gyẵgyẵ} Beschi says in the dictionary: "56th year out of their 60 years; it was 1742 A.D. and it will be 1802". ¹² From this, one can infer that Beschi was working at the dictionary even after 1742 A.D. Continuing this line of argument we find that against \textit{bārē̃} Beschi has: 57th year out of the 60; it is this year 1743 A.D." ¹³ Against the next year \textit{gāyānyās} we have the following: "58th year out of the 60 years; it will be 1744 A.D." ¹⁴ These points to go to show that Beschi was working at the dictionary in 1743.

The reports of Lutheran Missionaries at Tranquebar, who, though not too friendly with Beschi with regard to his religious attitude, had a great admiration for his literary works, give us precious information about the life of Beschi. According to an article of a Lutheran Missionary in India, W. Germann, in a Mission periodical, ¹⁵ after the capture of Tiruchirapalli Beschi had to flee in disguise leaving his manuscripts behind; one of them, the Dictionary of high Tamil (Caturakarati) had come into the hands of the Tranquebar Missionaries who began to copy it assiduously. When Beschi heard of it, he wrote warning them to see that the copy they
had was not a defective one; in the same letter he told them that he was working on a Lexicon Tamulico-Latinum Idiomatis Vulgaris (a dictionary of common Tamil). The report of January 1745 states that in his correspondence with Missionary Dal, Beschi "has agreed to offer us for print his latest book Lexicon Linguae Vulgaris." Since at the beginning of 1745 the dictionary was called the latest, it was in all probability over in 1744. The French translation has this year.

Thus it is clear that this dictionary was the fruit of Fr. Beschi's final years - he died in 1747 - when he was no longer able to be an active missionary preaching, travelling and organising. The book was meant for his co-missionaries who were on active service and as such it was a source of great consolation for him. Let us hear him in his preface: "it is enough and more for me if I, in my service to the apostolic painters, could supply the colours and the words ready-made to them who are trying to restore God's image in men destroyed by sin. Let them have the praise of eloquence, let me glory in having given them words. Let them gather handfuls (of harvest) in joy, let them acknowledge that I have sown the seeds not without labour. If Paul is aid to have been raging against Stephen through the hands of all, as he kept the clothes of all, why should they not say that I labour in the Lord's vineyard through the mouth and pen of all, as I have tried to supply words to all."
CONTENTS

The words are arranged according to the Tamil alphabetical order, the meaning and explanation given in Latin, though occasionally the explanation is also in French verbs and Portuguese. For words the conjugation and their construction are pointed out. For compound words the root is also given wherever possible. Being a dictionary of common Tamil, the book contains words and phrases used in the ordinary life and often as they are pronounced, e.g., கூர்பை, குண்டு என்பு, எந்தாறு அற்று என்று, கூடத்தை. But common Tamil, in the mind of Beschi, does not signify mere colloquialism; it stands for words and phrases that are commonly used in speaking and writing.17 Beschi is against writing words as they are pronounced, e.g., after giving the meaning of the word இருபரியா as a fortified palace, he adds: 'some write erroneously இருப்பா'. He points out the difference in pronunciation for difference in meaning. e.g., இறியா, kayam - body; gayam - mind.

It is very interesting to see here the abundance of phrases and idioms for ordinary words. After giving three different meanings for the word மத்த (hand), Beschi gives no less than 49 phrases in which one could be used; மத்திய is used as என்றால் மத்திய மத்திய மத்திய மத்திய, which means 'as I gave him something first, he came again.' - இறிய - means metaphorically to steal: இறியானவர் என்றால் இறியானவர் - 'given the occasion, he will steal well'.
For the word குற்று (little) he gives four uses, of which two are worth noting: குற்றும் குற்றும் வந்து குற்று குதும் to make little of some one; குற்றும் குற்றும் குற்றும் குற்றும் little-mindedness and குற்றும் குற்றும் குற்றும் little-minded person. The word வந்து has six different uses; the forth is 'perceive'... thus வந்து வந்து - I perceived smell; in the sixth use is given the phrase: வந்து வந்து வந்து வந்து - which means 'to hear the report of those who narrate, not what they know but what they have heard in passing; therefore commonly it means 'never believe what you hear.' The word வந்து can be used with different words; with முடிவு or முடிவு or முடிவு it means to rain; with முடிவு முடிவு - it means to fall down gently; with முடிவு it means to rain violently; with முடிவு it means to rain continuously; with முடிவு or முடிவு or முடிவு it means to stop.

Sayings and proverbs about which Beschi remarks in the preface: "In these I shall often bring forward sayings and proverbs which are mostly not foreign to common speech"\(^{18}\) abound in the dictionary. 'தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு' 'தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு' 'தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு' 'தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு தோண்டு' are some of the sayings with literary reference. பொருளாதார பொருளாதார பொருளாதார பொருளாதார பொருளாதார 'What is found in the word is found
in the human body. Wherefore Indians too consider man as a microcosm.' இந்த வேதச் வித்தியாசம் - Things of future will be provided for in future. அந்தாரிசுவ அந்த வாழ் வழி - the touchstone of love is the back of a friend; that is to say, love is known by those things which are done or said in the absence of the friend'. என்னும்போது வாழ்வில் பொறிகத்திற்கு "He who desires nothing will not weep'. என்னும் வாழ்வில் பொறிகத்திற்கு "Even after the healing of the wound, there remains the scar. This proverb is used to express how difficult is perfect reconciliation of friends and full restoration of lost fame'. என்னும் வாழ்வில் "The voice of a little old woman does not agree with the lute. It is ironically said when one does not listen to the advice of another.' என்னும் வாழ்வில் "If you live humble, you will be happy'. என்னும் வாழ்வில் "When the stomach is looking for gruel, does the hair of your head desire flowers? It means: "XX You have nothing to eat, and you want to adorn your hair'!

Some books on medicine, like Vaittia Murai, Nilakandi, Vira melugu etc., are attributed to Beschi and local tradition round about Elakkurichi and Manapad asserts that Beschi was an expert in Tamil medicine. The dictionary of common Tamil with its frequent references to medicine and diseases makes us think that Beschi was not a stranger to native medicine. After translating the proverb என்னும் வாழ்வில்... வாழ்வில்...
as 'the fruit Kadukkai is poisonous inside and the root suku is poisonous outside', Beschi adds that in the preparation of medicines they remove the seed of the former and the skin of the latter. စားစောင်း is a disease of the tongue and physicians distinguish seven kinds of it. စားစောင်း is the same as ပြင်းခြင်း, a small plant whose seed is medicinal and sweet-smelling. အောက်လား refers to a disease of the ear and တောင်းလား to a disease that obstructs the throats of animals and kills them. လိုးကြည်စောင်း is the fluid from the tree which is purgative but stops pain; diluted with water it serves as yellow paint. No less than 15 kinds of fever are enumerated under စိုးစောင်း.

This dictionary was meant for missionaries and his knowledge of pedagogy has helped Beschi to keep in mind the standard and the need of his student-missionaries. In the explanation of the words and phrases and proverbs, therefore, he occasionally refers to what his students already know from their classical training. To clarify the saying 'သို့ကြည်စောင်း လိုက်စောင်းလိုက်စောင်း လိုက်စောင်း လိုက်စောင်း' — the Latin proverb is quoted: 'Nodum in scirpo quaerit' (He looks for a knot in a bulrush,), said of those who imagine difficulties where there are non. To the proverb 'သို့ကြည်စောင်း လိုက်စောင်းလိုက်စောင်း လိုက်စောင်း လိုက်စောင်း is given the corresponding Latin proverb 'Gutta cavat lapidem, non bis sed saepe cadendo.' (Even a drop of water hollows a stone by falling, not just twice, but often.) Describing
Beschi says that it is a tree very much looking like the European fig tree and points out the difference in the taste of the fruit and the manner of fructification. The interjection is used like the Latin 'fi' and is repeated. Thus the line of Plautus, 'fi fi, foetet mihi tuus sermo' can be translated as 'fi fi, foetet mihi tuus sermo'. When pointing out the use of the green stone when polished, namely, that any thread tied to it becomes fire-proof, Beschi surmises that Pliny refers to this stone in his work 'Naturalis Historia' Bk.36, Ch.22.19

Here and there very useful practical instructions are given to missionaries in the use of Tamil. is an interjection in which husband addresses or calls his wife, and women one another. And even if the parent calls thus his daughter and the son his mother, it is not proper that a priest should call thus any woman. By the word a girl is addressed in contempt of familiarity. 'It does not become us to use it.' (said modestly). Hence one must not say of different sexes: ' for even if they go on a journey, it might be badly interpreted. 

Addenda for dissyllabic and polysyllabic words to be careful about pronunciation is another valuable help for missionaries. Though a dictionary of common Tamil, it glitters with frequent references to higher Tamil, the language of poetical literature. It is interesting to note that against
the names of classical Tamil authors Beschi gives a short commentary about their works, presumably because he thought, a general knowledge of Tamil literature was a part of missionary's pastoral knowledge. 'ddf' when used adjectively becomes ddf. Hence a book is called sddf as it narrates the death of a certain tddf the reason for which arose from a single ddf, it is a book of recondite language and explained by a few; it is, however, deservedly praised by all. 'ddf' literally is an incorruptible gem ...... Commonly it is the name of a Tamil poetic work, the best of all, in which a king called sddf is praised. It is a work truly poetical, of profound diction, from which the author of tddf acknowledges to have borrowed what he wrote about virtues and the punishments of hell. (The author) seeks appropriately enough, though at times he spoils (the work) by improper sexual matters'. tddf is a famous epic poem concerning the expeditions of Raman against tddf. The fifth meaning of sddf is 'diversity of tones (rhythm). Thus in sddf all the verses are sddf, but the rhythms are 87. sddf honorifically is a woman of advanced age. By antonomasia (using epithet for the proper name) the sister of the poet sddf is thus called and she is not known by any other name and she has produced many works which are praiseworthy and are learnt by children at the beginning. Under the letter sddf Beschi remarks: 'Referring to this letter Auveyar
said, 'ஏற்றுள்ளே பூம்'. Bend the entrance e.g., to the fortress, the rampart etc., by recurving ways, as is the form of the letter ப். Beschi has always a predilection for Tiruvalluvar, which is evident in this dictionary too. என் ரோமச்சி is a famous poet from the class of Parea. He wrote quite appropriately in verses called என் ரோமச்சியர். எ is the first letter in the Tamil alphabet, as in all languages, not to speak of European languages, but in Tamil, Sanskrit, Malayalam, Telugu, Maharashtra, Kannada, Singalese and the other 18 languages which Indians acknowledge. Whence the poet called என் ரோமச்சி begins his book with this couplet

என் ரோமச்சி என் ரோமச்சி என் ரோமச்சி என் ரோமச்சி

'Everywhere the letters begin from one A, just as the whole universe takes its origin from one God!' என் ரோமச்சி is strictly the same as என் ரோமச்சி in Sanskrit, i.e., special difference ... Thus Tiruvalluvar has elegantly and religiously said:

என் ரோமச்சி என் ரோமச்சி என் ரோமச்சி என் ரோமச்சி

'Food, dress, the procreation of children - these are common to all living beings. The natural sense of shame is special to man. For animals are not moved by a sense of shame.'

These examples of telling proverbs, references to medicine, instructions adapted to missionaries and literary remarks do not in any way exhaust the list, but perhaps suffice to show that the dictionary of common Tamil was far from being a dry-as-dust book of synonyms but was an interesting book
and indispensable guide to the missionaries of those days, which could be of use to us too as the only mirror that faithfully reflects the customs, the living language and the literary trends of Tamil Nadu in the first half of the 18th century.
NOTES

1. Praefatio 'Saturakarati' - 'his insuper (i) Dictionarium tradit, ubi ances ac multiplex verborum omnium, prout elegantioria idématis scriptoribus plerumque summuntur, vis ac potestas constabit.'

2. Ibid. 'siquidem praeter vulgaris linguæ Lexicon, ubi quaslibet dictiones Latine, Gallice ac Lusitane explico'.

3. Vulgaris Tamulicae Linguae Dictionarium Tamulico-Latinum, Auctoria Praefatio: para 1. 'labore pariter ac taedio plenum opus'.

4. Ibid. para 3.

5. Ibid. para 1. 'A multis ante desideratum et jam diu a me promissum vulgaris Tamulicae linguæ Dictionarium in lucem tandem prodii'.

6. Bess s.j. 'Fr. Beschi - His times and his Writings', Trichinopoly, 1916, p.16

7. Ibid. p.226

8. Ibid. P.162

9. Ibid. p. 164

10. Ibid. p.167

11. Ibid. p. 167

12. Vulgaris Tam.ling.Dict. 56 us annus ex eorum 60; fuit an, Christi 1742, et erit 1802'

13. Ibid. 57 us ann. ex.60; est hic annus Chr.1743.

14. Ibid. 58 us annus ex eorum 60; erit a Christo 1744'.

15. W. Germain, "Die wissenschaftliche Arbeit unserer alten Tamulen-Missionare mit Berucksichtigung neuerer Leistungen" in the mission periodical: 'Missionschriichten der Ostindischen Missionsanstalt zu Halle' edited by Dr.C.Kramer,

Vol.17, Halle 1865.

17. Ibid. par. 3 'Hic autem, ut titulus satis indicat, vocabula tantum quae vulgo inter loquendum ac scribendum usurpantur et ad spectant, ordine alphabetico digesta refregat.'

18. Ibid. para 7.

19. Pliny's Naturalis Historia, Book 36 deals with precious stones, but Ch. 22 does not contain the exact words of Beschi: 'est et viridis lapis vehementer igni resistens;' ch. 22 and 31 have the idea expressed here. "Durat et Cysici delubrum, in quo filum aureum commissuris omnibus politi lapidis subjecit artifex, ..." (22)

"Amiantus alumani similis, nihil igni deperdit." (31)
3. **Portuguese-Latin-Tamil Dictionary**

To the Dictionary of Common Tamil Beschi added another small Dictionary of about 4,353 words as an appendix. He has given a separate introduction for it, so that we could consider it as a separate dictionary although he calls it the second part. Here the Portuguese words are given in the alphabetical order; for each word the Latin meaning is added; then come Tamil equivalents and phrases. This dictionary is still in manuscript form in the Mission archives of the Society of Jesus, at Shembaganur.

At the beginning of the introduction Beschi gives for this dictionary: "In the second part I have thought fit to place first Portuguese words; for this language is common almost to all here in India. (Many words) I don't deny will never be understood by all in the genuine sense". History tells us that the Portuguese language which was the first western language to enter and stay for a period in India was quite wide spread in the first half of the 18th century. Among the Catholic Missionaries too there were good many whose mother-tongue was Portuguese. The other non-Portuguese missionaries had, for the sake of intercourse with the Portuguese missionaries and political officers, to learn Portuguese. These could not of course be expected to comprehend the inner meaning of every Portuguese word. Hence having a regard for the usefulness of all, Besch always
adjoins the Latin meaning to the Portuguese words; as a result only the Portuguese words come in the alphabetical order but are immediately explained in Latin. "I did not want to avoid this double work so that out of the common zeal I might obtain also a double fruit."

Different in size, different in the language of the words in alphabetical order from the common dictionary, this one is different also in the main purpose for which the author composed it. Whereas the common dictionary aims at giving the missionaries all the words, either decent or less decent, and phrases and proverbs, as found in the ordinary life of the people which the missionaries will have to hear and understand, this Portuguese dictionary purposes to help missionaries in their personal attempt to express their mind. "For this dictionary has for its purpose to enable any one to expose the idea of his mind; therefore if one does not find some words in one place, let him but alter his idea and he will find other words with which he could express himself." Beschi intends to supply them not all the words that are available in Tamil or Portuguese but only the more common words so that success with these common or simpler words might lead the missionaries to handle are or more difficult words. "For the whole purpose of this second part is directed towards supplying the more common words to those who are trying to lisp like children and save the way easily (to handle) more difficult ones."
This main purpose made Beschi see to it that the work did not become a huge one; he chooses a few words more common and necessary for use. Likewise not all the corresponding Tamil words are given as equivalents but only those which are simpler and more common. No reference is here made to conjugation of verbs and their construction as in the first part. Words and phrases that are less modest are omitted here unlike in the common dictionary, for such words should only be understood and not used by a missionary.

Fearing that the missionary students might find the dictionary too small, the author concludes with this advice - "Let none accuse me of making it too small. Let the beginners diligently go through all that I shall say here, engrave them in their minds and use them assiduously in and out of season and they shall easily learn soon that what is necessary is not lacking here."

Although a small dictionary it is not wanting in an abundance of synonyms for necessary usage. For the words of ordinary use in Portuguese, all the words in Tamil are given. For the word mother (mam, mater) we find: மன்னிர, மன்னித, மன்ன, மன்னி, மன்னர், மன்னை, மன்னன், மன்னன், மன்னன்.

For the word father (páj, genitor) we have: மன்னை, மன்னும், மன்னை, மன்னை, மன்னை, மன்னை, மன்னை, பை.

For the word son (fillio, fillus) we have: மன்னர், மன்னர், மன்னர், மன்னர், மன்னர், மன்னர், மன்னர், in the plural.
for both sexes  வெள்ளை, பெளியல், புரட்சியல், முகல்.
For daughter (filla, fillia) அல், நாரீஸ்வர, மணை, புரட்சியல்.
The word 'stop' or 'cease' is given six synonyms: நாசப்பெள், நாப்பெள், மத்தீஸ்வோ, மத்தீைச்வோ, மத்தீைச்வோ.
Then again முந்தையோ, முந்தையோ, முந்தையோ, முந்தையோ, முந்தையோ, 
முந்தையோ are mentioned as equivalents for the
word 'to tame' (amansar, domare, mansuefacere).

Beschi takes plains to point out the precise meaning
or shades of meaning of equivalents. He states that to
predict from the hand is உள்ள, from birds is உள்ள, 
from sound is உள்ள, from the occurrence of any cause is 
உள்ள. The common nouns for cloth (panno, pannas) போனோ, 
போனோ, போனோ become particularized as போவ௎னோ, போவ௎னோ, போவ௎னோ, போவ௎ைனோ (dress), as போவ௎ைனோ, போவ௎ைனோ (dress of 
women), as போவ௎ைனோ (frock of girls), as போவ௎ைனோ.
if not yet washed, as போவ௎ைனோ, போவ௎ைனோ if washed, 
as போவ௎ைனோ when it is lent by the washerman during 
the wash, as போவ௎ைைச்வோ, போவ௎ைைச்வோ, போவ௎ைைச்வோ if it is thin, 
as போவ௎ைைச்வோ, போவ௎ைைச்வோ if it is thick, as போவ௎ைைச்வோ.
போவ௎ைைச்வோ if it is a rough piece used for sacks, as போவ௎ைைச்வோ to signify the inner sheet worn by men, as போவ௎ைைச்வோ, போவ௎ைைச்வோ
போவ௎ைைச்வோ to signify the head dress, as போவ௎ைைச்வோ if
if it is a girdle eight cubits long, as போவ௎ைைச்வோ if it is 
Kind of fine cotton stuff, as போவ௎ைைச்வோ if it is the veil
of 32 cubits, as போவ௎ைைச்வோ if it is of 20 cubits, 
as போவ௎ைைச்வோ when it is a double piece of cloth that
is presented to honour some one, as பல்லவமு ஆம் if it
is made of silk, as பல்லவமு ஆம் if it is made of special
filaments, as பருவமு ஆம் when it is
made of golden (thread), as பெருக்க ஆம் if it is torn, as பெருக்க
if it is stitched up with many pieces, பெருக்க ஆம் if it is a
cloth with which anything, for instance a vessel is covered,
as பல்லவமு ஆம், பல்லவமு ஆம் if it is a double piece
of cloth used as cradle for children and as பாலம் if it is
the cloth used by the bride in marriage.

புல்லார் (cotton) must be written as புல்லார் புல்ளா
if it is of the kind that is cultivated every year, and as
பல்லார் புல்ளா ஆம் if it is cultivated once in three years. To
cleanse the corn of stone-pieces one must use தேர்க்கையார்,
to cleanse it from small particles one must use தேர்க்கையார்,
பொய்ப்பையார். The word love has the common terms: பெரு, பனி,
வரு, வளி, வாழ்க்கை; if it is sensual love with pertur-
bation of mind, it is புல்ளா, if it is the love of an in-
ferior towards a superior, it is பல்லா and that of a
superior to an inferior, is பல்லா, பல்லவமு, பல்லவமு, பல்லவ
மு. பல்லா மு are general terms to express 'to go'; to go
about here and there anxiously must be expressed by பல்லா மு,
பல்லா மு தென்றை

to go dancing about or hopping,
by மாளை மாளை மாளை தென்றை to creep, by மாளை, மாளை,
மாளை, to crawl like a snake by மாளை, மாளைமாளை,
to limp by தங்கந்தை, தங்கந்தை. In the preparation of
the unripe fruit of mangoes, பல்லவமு (salted mango) is
different from மிளகுள்ளம் (dipped in mere water that is salted) and from முண்பயிற்று (made to dry afterwards). An inn where an any traveller is received is அகன்ற, அடம், where only brahmans are received and given free meal is ராயக்கடம். Such long lists of accurate meanings must have helped missionary students to become exact - "conference (maketh) a ready man and writing an exact man" (Bacon).

A difficulty for missionary students who have found the word is to find out the right idiom. Aware of this, Beschi takes care to add the phrases and idioms that correspond to Latin phrases and words. To warm oneself (aquentare, calæfieri) in the sun or at the fire is expressed in Tamil as எதிர் அமதுரை. To be possessed by the devil (apoderarse, demonem invadere aliqua) finds its equivalent in சூல் அமையார். To dawn (amanshacer, diescere) is idiomatically expressed by மான் அடைந்து, பாண்டகின்று.

Linguistically it is interesting to note words that have a new meaning in our days or have changed phonetically. According to this dictionary ஆண்டர்ஸை, சுமந்தைம் meant to proclaim one with praises (aclamer, laudillus proclamare) and ஆண்டர்ஸை, சுமந்தையார்.

பைன்டைண்ணீர் were equivalents of to applaud (aplaudir, applaudare). Today சுமந்தா கைன் துளை பைன்டைண்ணீர் seems to mean to announce, and பைன்டைண்ணீர் has perhaps changed into பைன்டைண்ணீர் to applaud. 'To add' (acrescentar, addere) had been expressed not only
by முடிகு but also by இறையாற்ற, காண்நிலை. To-day the last two are more used. 'To accuse some one' (accusacao) had been expressed by எடை, எட்டா, புராரை காண்நிலை; to-day காண்நிலை is used not so the other two. For proverb (adagio) besides useful word முடிகு used even today, they used in the 18th century the word பரசிப்தற்கு. 'To be sick' (adorear, infirmare) had two equivalents: பரசிப்தற்கு, and பரார்ந்தைத்தற்கு; and the sick man (achacado, aeger) was spoken of as பரசிப்தற்கு, மூத்த தவறா. 'To clean' (slimpar, mundare), we express it by செரி முதல்; they used தை முடிகு. காண்நிலை .... according to the present usage means red colour, then, it meant golden yellow colour (amarela) காண்நிலை, காண்நிலை, காண்நிலை. Along with காண்நிலை காண்நிலை, காண்நிலை to express little by little (a pekacos, minutim) they used also காண்நிலை and காண்நிலை கார் which are used now in Malayalam. Arithmetics (arithmetica) was known as காண்நிலை (as even today) and also as பார்ஸ்கார் (which is not used today).

The great value of this small dictionary is its being a book of basic Tamil which contains the words ordinarily required and sufficient to express oneself in common Tamil in 18th century. That it was useful later on also is testified by the existence of the French-Tamil dictionary by Fr. Ford who took all the words of this Portuguese dictionary of Beschi and translated them into French.
4. OTHER DICTIONARIES.

Fr. Beschi was not the first to adopt the alphabetical order nor the first to use the word Akarati to mean dictionary. Chidambara Revana Siddhar had composed in 1594 A.D. 'Agarathi-Nikandu' which was the first reference book to use the alphabetical order; but his alphabetical arrangement consisted in grouping together all the words beginning with ऐ, then ए and so on to ॐ; there is no further alphabetical arrangement under individual letters. This has been called the First-letter order. 'Akarathi-Monai-k-kakarathi - y-ethukai' is the title of a manuscript whose author is unknown, which is probably anterior to Fr. Beschi's Caturakarati; this work is an attempt to follow alphabetical order up to the second letter of the word, monai referring to the first letters and etukai to the second letters. But Fr. Beschi's Caturakarati followed for the first time a strict alphabetical order throughout the word. The name commonly used to designate dictionaries in Tamil had been Uricol or Nikandu. Agarati would have meant, in the 16th century, just an alphabetical order, nothing more. Hence it is that Revana Siddhar, to make sure of the meaning of Dictionary called his work Agarati-Nikandu, and not merely Akarati. But Beschi's Caturakarati is the first dictionary to bear the sole name Akarati as its title.

In another respect also Caturakarati broke new grounds. Whereas the former dictionaries like Tivakaram,
Pinkalantai and Cutamani had given their different meanings or synonyms in verses and often in words which were as high or hard as the word to be explained, Caturakarati, as Fr. Beschi remarks in his invocatory verse\(^2\), give up the ancient custom of metrical form for fear of obscuring the meaning. And in his preface to the dictionary of common Tamil, Fr. Beschi clearly asserts that in this dictionary of High Tamil (Caturakarati) he has explained the words of high Tamil through words of common Tamil, as if one were to explain Latin words by means of Portuguese words.

Among Catholic Missionaries there had been others who had prepared dictionaries in Tamil, but it is Beschi's dictionaries that have survived the ravages of time. In his letters to Europe Fr. Henrique Henriques S.J., often speaks of a vocabulary of Tamil words and terms.\(^3\) Fr. Antony de Proenca was the author of the\(^4\) first printed Tamil dictionary. It was in 1679 that the Jesuit Press at Ambalakat printed this dictionary along with some manuscript works of Frs. De Nobili, Bruno, and Martin.\(^5\) This was a Portuguese-Tamil dictionary in which\(^6\) the Portuguese section was printed in movable type and the Tamil section was engraved on wooden blocks by Ignatius Aichamoni, a native of Malabar. Paulinus a San Bartholomea describing it in his Examen Historicum draws our attention to the preface of the author, in which he mentions many imperfections in the Tamil orthography; he gives the instance of \(\text{கை} \) which can be read as cayam or gayam.\(^7\)
Fr. Beschi, in his preface to the dictionary of Common Tamil affirms the existence of earlier dictionaries and the help he got from them. "There have not been wanting, those who before me have wished to render missionaries a similar service; their works, however, have either perished or have been - I do not know how - so spoilt that one cannot confidently follow them without necessarily falling in to the pit like the blind following the blind." And during the life time of Besch, Fr. Aloysius de Bourges, known for his zeal and learning had prepared an immense dictionary as a result of many years of study and labour. But it had two defects: first it mixed up words of common Tamil with those of higher Tamil; secondly in the dictionary, synonym was intermingled. Consequently it grew up into an immense size, and beginners could not distinguish the common words from the uncommon. A special feature of this dictionary was that it contained the different variants of words used in colloquial speech. For instance with the word சேற்று the dictionary has சேற்று, சேற்று and சேற்று with the word பொருட் it has பொருட், பொருட், or பொருட் How could the student separate the right from the wrong? "Following the house-holder in the Gospel, I think," remarks Fr. Beschi, "who forbidding (the servants) to pull out the thistle, kept it to be separated and burnt at the time of the harvest, he (Fr. Burges) wanted to separate the false from the true and to expurgate; but before he could do so, he was called by the Lord to the reward of his labours leaving his desire to us. I admit I have been
helped by his work, although I did not think I ought to follow it, as they say, blindly; but I have taken (from it) a good many words not without examining and selecting."

It is interesting here to note the lexicographical activity of the Lutheran missionaries of Tranquebar. The great missionary and Tamil scholar, Bartholomew Ziegenbalg who came to Tranquebar in 1706 began to work at a Tamil prése dictionary and in 1708 that dictionary contained more than 2000 words written in three columns, the first having the Tamil word, the second its pronunciation in Latin types and the third its meaning in German. He had read and made extracts from more than hundred books - theological, historical, philological and even medical and economic books. Though he had not arranged the words according to the Tamil alphabet, he had prepared a German index to facilitate the use of the dictionary. In 1708 he wrote about it: "This dictionary, I think, is a great treasure, because the profit with which it can be used, can be and will be (as we pray God) inestimable". In 1712 the arrangement of words according to the Tamil alphabet was completed; all derivatives and idioms were grouped under the root word. The dictionary had grown to 40,000 words but the second and third columns (Latin and German) had not yet been added. It was written on olai only. After the death of Ziegenbalg in 1719 the dictionary was copied on paper in 1736 and sent to Sartorius, a missionary in Madras, who began to supply Latin words and add new Tamil words. In 1736
he wrote: "I have finished about one third of it. If God
gives time and strength it can be finished in two years". In January 1737 he reported that he had finished with
supplying Latin words and added: "Now it remains only to
complete it finally and to improve the arrangement, to correct
here and there and to make a Latin index". But Sartorius
died in 1738 and his colleague Gesiter continued his work
on the lexicon but he too could not complete it on account of
some troubles in his eyes.

Besides this prose dictionary, Ziegenbalg seems to have prepared a poetical dictionary, containing 1200 words,
divided into twelve parts according to the meaning of the words;
the first part contained words relating to the gods and to heaven, the second words relating to men etc. The report of
1729 from Tranquebar speaks of its being there; but later it is not mentioned. It is possible, says German, that part
of it was worked into the above prose dictionary.

Such a laboriously prepared dictionary was not printed by the missionaries of Tranquebar who had a printing press, because, as missionary Church writes in an unpublished letter: "a very accurate and laborious revision and increase of words of ordinary life is very necessary. We would certainly be able to do that quickly, if we could get the lexicon of P. Beschi, which he mentions in his grammar, because he has a good grasp of the language, but this looks very doubtful." For Obuch had written to Beschi for permission
to combine the words of Caturakarati with the words of the Tranquebar dictionary and printing a common dictionary, but met with a refusal. Obuch wrote to the Bishop of Mylapore so that he might intercede. The Bishop answered that he would try to get Caturakarati but insisted it must be printed separately. Then the missionaries of Tranquebar remonstrated against this (in an ecumenical spirit) saying, continues the letter of Obuch "that the dictionary collected here by many missionaries could not simply be left aside and on the other hand we had neither time nor money to edit two dictionaries and that this also would be of no use to the lovers of the language and that therefore our opinion was that both should be fused into one, that if the work and diligence of each could not be sufficiently distinguished in the preface or through some other marks, a certain denial of one's merits would have to be tolerated for the sake of the cause of Christ, for which we were gladly prepared, but no positive answer has yet come".

Though the Bishop's answer did not come, the said lexicon of Beschi came to Tranquebar 'through a peculiar providential dispensation'. In 1741 Trichy was taken by the Mahrattas and Beschi had to flee in disguise leaving all his books behind. After some time a soldier went to Tanjore and offered two big palm leaf books for sale one of which was bought by a seveicaren. The Tranquebar catechist Alagappan saw it, recognised it as Beschi's lexicon and reported the
matter to Tranquebar. The owner, serveicaren, was not willing to sell the book for any price; finally he allowed it to be copied, but gave only a few leaves at a time. After copying, the Tranquebar missionaries found to their joy that it was Beschi's dictionary of high Tamil in which every word was explained in ordinary language. Obuch who had tried unsuccessfully to get the dictionary first from Beschi, then through the Bishop of Mylapore was now happy and planned to write this (Beschi's) dictionary into the old Tranquebar dictionary.

When Beschi heard about this, he wrote to Tranquebar expressing his fear that the copy they had at Tranquebar might be defective and therefore not ready for print. But Obuch was satisfied with the copy he had made after comparing it as accurately as possible with the original in which Beschi himself had corrected a good deal; he wanted also to consult the best Tamil scholars for some necessary explanations.

In the above letter of Beschi he had said that he was working on a lexicon Tamilico-Latinum idiomatis vulgaris. Obuch would have liked to see this dictionary; but doubted very much if he would succeed. However the report of 25th January 1745 gives the good news that Beschi had calmed down, was reconciled to the fact that his lexicon styli sublimiori had come to their hands, and in answer to a letter of missionary Dal, he had offered his latest prose dictionary for print. Now the missionaries of Tranquebar too changed their former
position. Whereas formerly they wanted to merge Beschi's Caturakarati into their own, now they would print Beschi's dictionary of common Tamil separately. Still it did not seem proper that they should put aside their own dictionary and print a different one. They wanted to see Beschi's second and new dictionary and then decide. "As the author, on our demand, sent a specimen to us and when we found on comparing it with our dictionary that Beschi's gave additional words and was more accurate in verbis anomalis, we were of the opinion that under certain conditions we should print it." These conditions were that the second part of this dictionary, which was a portuguese-Latin-Tamil dictionary, should be omitted and in the first part the French and Portuguese meanings, which were here and there added to the Latin, should be deleted, because otherwise the work would go up to a hundred sheets. But Beschi did not want a single letter to be omitted. And that was the end of it. "During his life time," the report concludes, "we can hardly get it; but perhaps it would happen after his death which cannot be far away, as he is already old, if God so wills."

With this, the negotiations of Tranquebar came to an end and also their lexical work in general. The dictionary planned and started by Ziegenbalg as a Tamil-Latin-German dictionary, revised and improved by later Missionaries into a Tamil-Latin dictionary was never printed. They had to get along with more copying, for which the missionaries had to devote some time daily. "If the older missionaries had taken
taken the trouble of composing, the younger ones could well copy it, which at the same time gives them an exercise in the language. 18

One of these younger missionaries was Fabricius who did not need a second invitation to copy; till the end of his life the lexicon remained in his hand. According to the report of 1744 he was continuing his side-work of transposition of the Tamil-Latin dictionary into a Latin-Tamil one which was more needed than the other, 19 meanwhile intending to print two dictionaries: one Tamil-Latin and the other Latin-Tamil. A few years later this idea was changed and when in 1775 he began to print the dictionaries they were Tamil-English and English-Tamil dictionaries. The Tamil-English dictionary was over in 1779 and the printing of the next was begun at once. 20

Thus, "the history of Tranquebar lexicon begins with Zieg enbalg, rises with Walther-Beschi and reaches a preliminary conclusion with Fabricius". 21 It is interesting to know that Rottler succeeded, where Obuch had failed, because Rottler used Beschi's prose lexicon which had given him light in doubt. After Rottler's death there was found among his papers a manuscript which was the Tamil-French dictionary of Fr. De Bourges, a missionary of Madurai.

In the 19th century Dr. Gury S.J., a missionary of Madurai compiled a dictionary, "Dictionarium Tamulico-Latinum", printed in 1852. In his preface Fr. Gury states that he makes references in his dictionaries to the paragraph numbers of
Beschi’s Grammar of common Tamil; he has used all the words of Beschi’s dictionary of common Tamil, but has omitted all the phrases, as these were found in other authors. He has taken all the words of Caturakarati and the Tamil-English dictionary of Rottler, but not so of the Tamil dictionary of Jaffna, which was found easily in the hands of every Tamil students. Thus it can be seen that the words of common Tamil and high Tamil which Fr. Beschi had explained in two separate dictionaries were gathered in the same dictionary. The tendency of lexicographers outside India was, in the 19th century, to combine in one and the same dictionary words of literary usage and common daily usage, keeping in view the needs of both scholars and the general public. The Tamil-French dictionary of MM. Mousset and Dupuis of the Society of French Foreign Missionaries is a standing example of this new development. “It is with pleasure”, says the introduction, “that we pay a tribute of gratitude to the principal sources from which we have drawn, such as the dictionary of Rottler, that of Jaffna, the Caturakarati of Fr. Beschi, the manuscript dictionary of the same father, that of Fr. Bounes and the lithographed Tamil-Latin dictionary of Fr. Gury”. The Madurai Tamil Perakarati is another example; the work of many Tamil scholars, it contains all the words both high and common, gives in the appendix recent loan words from such languages as Portuguese, Hindi and English. It is modelled on the Caturakarati of Beschi with its four parts and even the invocatory verses of all but the first part are verbatim borrowed from Caturakarati. One is
reminded of the statement of a modern scholar about Caturakarati; "In this book, which was the first dictionary in Tamil on modern lines he (Beschi) set the standard for all subsequent lexicographers. Rottler and Percival and Winslow and native lexicographers have, with acknowledgement or without, drawn largely on it."^22

The Latin-Tamil dictionary of Beschi portraying the current language of the times was so popular that a French translation of it was made. This translation must have been done immediately for the manuscript copy^23 bears in the front page the year 1744. Whether 1744 was the year of the completion of the original or of the French translation, one cannot be sure. The preface of Beschi written in Latin has been translated into French, omitting of course Beschi's mention of the use of Latin. A close scrutiny seems to show that the French translation has omitted some of the explanations of the original.

The contribution of Beschi's three dictionaries to Tamil in the beginning of the 18th century will be better appreciated if we remember that the first attempt to collect and define all words in good usage in English was made by Nathan Bailey in his folio dictionary published in 1730. And Beschi completed his dictionary of literary words, Caturakarati, in 1732.

The lexicographer has long expected to register only words thought 'good' for literary usage. And to decide authoritatively the question of good usage, Italy had founded
in polite circles) as they were handed by the people of the 18th century, although he gave the student missionaries occasional direction as to good usage. Beschi prepared separate dictionaries for the literary words and the common words whereas a latter day tendency has been to gather the two kinds in the same dictionary, to point out the historical development of words and to show special shades of meaning by the use of quotations. The Tamil Lexicon published under the authority of the Madras University is an embodiment of this modern tendency.
NOTES

1. Tamil Lexicon (Published under the authority of the University of Madras - Vol.VI - History of Tamil Lexicography, by the Editor, page xxxiii.

2. Pansi - பாணி என்றும் கூறினான் கூறின் வழக்கமாகம்


4. Dr.Kamil Bvelebil, Tamil Culture, April-June 1961


7. Although no trace is found of the printed copy of Proenzais dictionary, there is in the Jesuit Mission archives at Shembaanur, a manuscript copy of it. It has no preface. Here are some of the words found in it: போன்றை, trabths, Pena (punishment); எடுக்கவண்டோம் mentir (to lie);

murmuracaeo, com என்பனயும் குழி (to murmur).

The dictionary follows the alphabetical order only for the first letter; this is the order of some words: என்று, என்போன்று, என்னோம், என்றும் மையகம், என்றும் மையகம், என்றும் மையகம், என்றும் மையகம்.

Another group: என்றும் பாணி, என்றும், என்று