

Martha's Vineyard French.

INDIAN CONVERTS:

OR, SOME

A C C O U N T

O F T H E

LIVES and Dying SPEECHES of a
considerable Number of the Christianized
INDIANS of *Martha's Vineyard*, in
New-England.

V I Z.

- I. Of Godly Ministers.
- II. Of other Good Men.
- III. Of Religious Women.
- IV. Of Pious young Persons.

By *Experience Mayhew*, M. A. Preacher of
the Gospel to the *Indians* of that Island.

To which is added,

Some Account of those *ENGLISH* MINISTERS
who have successively presided over the *Indian* Work
in that and the adjacent Islands. By Mr. *Prince*.

Acts x. 34, 35. *I perceive that GOD is no Respector of Persons :
but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteous-
ness, is accepted with him.*

Acts xv. 8, 9. *Giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us :
and put no Difference between us and them, purifying their Hearts
by Faith.*

Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. *Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, &c.*

L O N D O N,

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M.DCC.XXVII.

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To the HONOURABLE

William Thompson, Esq;

G O V E R N O U R,

A N D

To the rest of the *Honourable*
Company for the Propagation
of the Gospel in *New-Eng-*
land, and Parts adjacent in
America.

Honourable Sirs,

V E R Y admirable and surprizing
was the Favour of Heaven un-
to the *Aboriginal Natives* of
this Land, when it pleased the BLES-
SED GOD to send them the glorious Gos-
pel, after they had from Time immemorial

4 DEDICATION.

sat in Darkness, and in the Region of the Shadow of Death.

It was still a further Manifestation of Divine Favour, and Beneficence to them, when our GLORIOUS LORD stirred up the Hearts of many well disposed People in *England*, to make liberal Contributions for the Encouragement of those Servants of his, who, for the Glory of his great Name, and out of Compassion to the Souls of the miserable *Heathen*, were, without any Prospect of worldly Advantage, endeavouring their Conversion.

And it was yet an additional Mercy to the disconsolate *Indians*, in these Ends of the Earth, and to such also as were engaged in the Work of Gospelizing them, when the Society in *England* for the Propagation of the Gospel here, were by *Royal Charter* erected into a *Corporation*, for the more effectual carrying on that great and good Work.

It is from your *honourable Company* so established, and acting on such a Foundation, that such as are here employed for the Good of the *Indians*,
have,

DEDICATION. 5

have, under GOD, their Encouragement to that Work and Service, and Direction in it.

And among the many Instances wherein the Wisdom and Care of the *honourable Company* have been manifested, none has been more comprehensive than their directing and instructing a number of honourable and reverend Persons here, to inspect and manage the Affair; and who do accordingly heartily desire, and faithfully endeavour to promote the Interest of Religion among those Natives of the Land.

The Work of Gospelizing the *Heathen* being thus primarily under *your Honours* Direction and Management, it is very fit and convenient, that such as are here employed in that Service, should from time to time give an Account of their Management to *your Honours*; as also the Successes they meet with in the Work wherein they are engaged, and so of the good Effects of what has been expended for the great Ends already mentioned, and of the Care and Pains that have been taken, both by the *honourable Company*,

6 DEDICATION.

pany, and their honourable Commissioners residing here.

From these Considerations I have thought it my Duty to dedicate this historical Essay unto *your Honours*, tho otherwise it might have been too great a Boldness: besides, I cannot doubt but such a Discovery of the Efficacy of Divine Grace in the Conversion and Salvation of Sinners, as is here exhibited in the Lives and dying Speeches of a considerable number of our christianized *Indians*, whose spiritual Good *your Honours* have been long labouring to promote, will be very acceptable unto you.

That my Induction of Examples of true Piety are only taken from *one small Island*, is not because there have not been many such pious Converts in other Places, but because I have not been so well acquainted with the State of the *Indians* in them, as I have been there, where my great Grandfather, Grandfather, and my self have successively laboured for these *four-score Years*. Nor have I thought it convenient for me to enter into other Mens Lines, but rather leave it to them to
I give

DEDICATION. 7

give an Account themselves of what was observable in the Places wherein they have respectively laboured.

Entreating therefore *your Honours* Acceptance of this Essay of mine to do my Duty, written at the Motion of some of your *honourable Commissioners* here, and praying, that He who is the Lord of all would please to direct you in all that Work and Service, wherein He is pleased to employ you, particularly in that of propagating the glorious Gospel among the *Aboriginal Natives* of these *Parts of America*; and giving you most hearty Thanks for all you have hitherto done for their Good, as well as for your Favours to me, I subscribe my self,

Honourable Sirs,

Your most humble, and

most obedient Servant in

the Work of the Gospel,

Experience Mayhew.

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The AUTHOR'S

PREFACE

TO THE

READER.

THERE are more especially *two Things* requisite, to render any *History* acceptable and entertaining to judicious Readers; namely, *first*, That the Matters of Fact related, be worthy to be observed and recorded. *The other* is, that the Things reported be well attested and worthy of Credit.

The *former* of these will, I hope, be granted, with respect to my present Essay: However, I am content to submit this to the Judgment of such as are impartial.

The *Truth* of the History which I here offer to the World, is *that*, the clearing up whereof is mainly intended in this Epistle.

For this end, the first Thing I shall assert, is *my own Fidelity and Concern for Truth* in this Performance. I know well that no Lye of mine can be necessary for the Honour of GOD, or the Manifestation of the Glory of his Grace. And I can truly say, that I have not in this History imposed on others any thing which I do not myself believe. Indeed there are some things in it, which I lay no great stress upon, and therefore have but cautiously mention'd, and would have my Readers regard accordingly; yet I would not have related them, if I had not thought them probably true.

My Concern for Truth has been accompanied with proportionable Endeavours to avoid every thing contrary to it; and in giving these Examples of Piety, my first Care has
B been,

The Author's Preface.

been, not to mention any of whom there was not Reason to hope, that they were indeed *Godly Persons*, as well as by many so esteemed.

The greatest number of those whose Characters I have given, being Persons with whom I was *my self acquainted*, I have had the less Occasion for the Testimony of others concerning them: Yet even with respect to these, I have made use of the best Information I could get, not relying wholly on my own Opinion.

Respecting the *Morals* of the Persons whose Lives I have written, I have made diligent Enquiry of such as I thought best able to inform me; and this not only of such as I conceived would be ready to give as favourable an Account as they could of them, but even of such also as I had reason to think would be very ready to mention such Miscarriages as they might have seen in them, or otherwise known them to have been guilty of. Nor have I confined my Enquiries about them to those of their own Nation only; but have also obtain'd the best Information I could of their *English* Neighbours, who were best acquainted with them: and on the Testimony of such as these, I have in this Case laid more stress than on that of the *Indians*. Nor can I think that I have represented any, as if they lived better Lives than they really did.

I know some of the Persons whose Characters I have given, have sometimes lived viciously; and this has been accordingly observed and confessed in the Accounts given of them. It will therefore be a vain thing for any to tell me what is already acknowledged; yet possibly some that are prejudiced against the *Indians*, will not cease to impute to them, the Sins committed by them before they were converted, not duly considering how great a Change there was wrought in them before they died, or how fitly that may be said with respect to them, 1 Cor. vi. 11. *Such were some of you, but ye are washed, &c.*

Tho I could have mentioned many of our *Indians*, who have discovered very probable Signs of true Repentance in the Time of their last and long Sickneses, many of them dying of Chronical Diseases; yet considering the Doubtfulness of a Death-bed Repentance, I have not put any into my Catalogue of Penitents, in whom a remarkable Change did not appear while they were well and in Health: whatever Pains others, in the time of their Sickneses, have taken to prepare for Death, and whatever
Profession

Profession of Faith and Repentance they have made, or whatever Hopes in the Mercy of GOD thro' CHRIST they have declared; tho I could give several Instances of this kind, that would not be despised, if the Persons instanced in were of our own Nation.

With respect to the *Piety* of the Persons to whom this Account relates, with whom *I was not my self acquainted*, I have been obliged to rely much on the Testimonies of such of the *Indians* themselves, as had opportunity to observe their Deportment, and were in my Judgment worthy of Credit. But then I have not put any into my List, who were not *generally* esteemed Godly Persons by such as knew them, how good an Opinion soever *some* might have of them.

Tho as to their *Piety* in *general*, I have had the Testimonys of *many* Witnesses, yet I confess that as to many of their *particular* Actions and Expressions, I have had no more but *single* Testimonies: But then I have diligently considered the *Quality* of such Witnesses, and what other Circumstances there were to strengthen the Testimonies given, and have not reported to others what I do not my self think I have good ground to give credit to.

As I have, when I thought it necessary, strictly charged such as I have received Relations from, to keep close to the Truth therein; so I should not do them justice, if I did not affirm, that I generally observed in them such an Appearance of *Caution and Impartiality*, as constrained me to think them faithful Witnesses in the things related by them. Yea, I observed in some of them Marks of true *Piety* in themselves, while they were giving me an Account of the *Piety* of others; they sometimes opening their Mouths in the Praises of GOD for his distinguishing Goodness towards the Persons of whom they were speaking, at the same time acknowledging and lamenting their own Sinfulness, in coming so far short of what they saw in them; being much affected, and shedding many Tears, while they were thus discoursing.

As for those mentioned in this Essay, who died *before my Time*, I have in part taken my Information from Accounts formerly written by my Father, Grandfather, or others, being either printed or left in Manuscript; and partly from the oral Relations of Persons worthy of Credit, whether *English* or *Indians*.

