

A
L E T T E R

From the

Rev^d Mr. *Sergeant*

Of *Stockbridge*,

TO

Dr. *Colman*

Of BOSTON ;

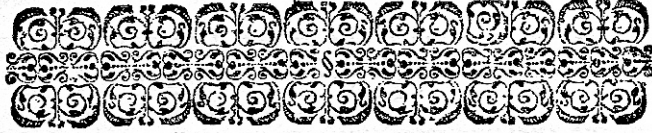
Containing Mr. *Sergeant's* Propofal of a more *effectual Method for the Education of Indian Children* ; to raife 'em if poffible into a *civil and induftrious People* ; by introducing the *Engliſh Language* among them ; and thereby *inſtilling* into their Minds and Hearts, with a more laſting *Impreſſion*, the *Principles of Virtue and Piety*.

Made *publick* by Dr. COLMAN at the Deſire of Mr. SERGEANT, with ſome *general Account* of what the Rev. Mr. ISAAC HOLLIS of----has already done for the *Sons* of this *Indian Tribe of Houſſatannoc*, now erected into a *Townſhip* by the GENERAL COURT, and called *Stockbridge*.

Job xxix. 16. *I was a Father to the Poor.*

Pfal. cii. 15, 18. *So the Heathen ſhall fear the Name of the LORD, and the People to be created, ſhall praiſe him.*

B O S T O N, Printed by ROGERS and FOWLE, for
D. HENCHMAN in Cornhill. 1743.




Mr. *Sergeant's* Letter

TO

Dr. *Colman.*

Stockbridge, August 1. 1743.

Reverend Sir,

 Now fend you a general and rough Draught of that Design for the *Education of Indian Children*, which I have some Times formerly hinted to you, that I had formed in my Mind, with a *Desire*, that you would *communicate* it to the World in as *publick* a Manner, as possible, and with such *Recommendations*, as you may think proper.

What I propose therefore in general is to take such a *Method* in the Education of our *Indian Children*, as shall in the most effectual Manner change their whole Habit of thinking and acting; and raise them, as far as possible, into the Condition of a civil industrious and polish'd People; while at the same Time the Principles of Vertue and Piety shall be carefully instilled into their Minds in a Way, that will make the most lasting Impression; and withal to introduce the *English Language* among them instead of their own imperfect and barbarous *Dialect*.

And

And to accomplish this *Design*, I propose to procure an Accommodation of about 200 Acres of *Land* in this Place, (which may be had without any Cost of the *Indian Proprietors*) and to erect an *House* on it, such as shall be thought convenient for a Beginning; and in it to maintain a Number of *Children and Youth* (not under *ten*, nor above *twenty* Years of Age;) and to have them under the Direction, Care and Tuition of *two Masters*, one to take the Oversight of them in their Hours of *Labour*, and the other in their Hours of *Study*; and to have their Time so *divided* between Study and Labour as to make one the *Diversion* of the other, that as little Time as possible may be lost in Idleness. It will, I think, be necessary, there should be two Masters for this Purpose, because it would be too tedious a Task for one. I propose that the Fruit of their *Labour* shall go to their own *Maintenance* and to carrying on the general Design; except perhaps some particular *Premiums* out of the Profits of their Labour, if it can be afforded, to encourage *Industry*. I propose also to have a Stock of *Cattle*, &c. maintained on the Place for the same Purpose.

I purpose to take into the Number, upon certain Conditions, from among any of the *Tribes* of *Indians* round about; that by *their* Means, under the Blessing of God, the Principles of Vertue and Christian Knowledge may be *spread* as far as possible; which, perhaps, in a Course of Years may, by the Grace of God, *open* the Way for the Propagation of Christianity to the *remotest Tribes*.

To lay the Foundation, and to *support* so great a Design as this, will without Doubt, cost a *great Deal* of Money; the Supply of which *depends* altogether upon the Smiles of *divine Providence*, and the *Charity* of good People, who may think it proper to favour it.

The

The *Need* of some fuch Design as this, is very obvious to all that are in any Measure acquainted with the Disposition and State of the *Indians in America*. It is well known, that Vertue and Piety make but a *slow Progress* among them in the Methods that have hitherto been used to promote these Ends. Nor can I think of any Thing so *likely*, as what is here proposed, in human Probability, to *root out* their vicious Habits, and to change their whole Way of Living. I hope therefore the apparent Goodness of this Design, will recommend it to all charitably disposed Persons, who would gladly *honour God with their Substance*; and that it will approve itself to and be promoted by Persons of *all Parties*; since it is a Design *generous* in its Intention, and calculated for the common Good of a *very miserable and degenerate Part of our Race*, and has *no Party-View* in it at all. I persuade myself therefore that all those who are concerned for the *Glory* of our common MAKER, and *the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh*, and for the Honour of our common SAVIOUR, to whom *the Heathen are given for his Inheritance, and the utmost Ends of the Earth for his Possession*, or that are only inspired with the generous Sentiments of *Compassion to the miserable*, will unite in promoting the Design here proposed.

If PROVIDENCE encourage and succeed this Design, and a Fund sufficient to carry it on, can be procured, I purpose to enlarge *the Foundation*, so as to take in *Girls*, as well as *Boys*, to be educated in a Manner suitable to the Condition of their *Sex*; for I think the Cultivation of *both the Sexes* has a natural Tendency to improve each other more easily and successfully.

I design the *Discipline* to be used with them shall be as strict as those will bear, who know *nothing like Government* among themselves, and have an *Aversion* to every Thing that *restrains* their Liberty.

I know it is apt to be *suspected* in such Designs, pretended to be for the publick Good, that there is some *Self-Interest at Bottom*, which is the Spring of the Motion. If the World *suspect* any Thing of this Sort in the *present Projection*, as some no Doubt will ; and the rather perhaps, because it has been *amused* with Projections of this Kind, which have appeared to many meer *personal and selfish*, or, at best only *Party Designs*, I know not how to give any further *Satisfaction* for the present, than to *declare solemnly* that I have *no other Aim*, than the *Good of the Indians*, and that I have no Expectation of any *personal Benefit* at all, more than the *meer Satisfaction* of being *instrumental*, under GOD, of doing them so great a *Kindness*, and rendering them a more *happy Society* by cultivating *Humanity* and Vertue among them.

That the *Indians*, in general, are a People *difficult* to be reformed from their own *foolish*, barbarous, and wicked Customs, the *Unsuccessfulness* of Attempts upon them for this Purpose is a melancholy *Proof*, which though it may appear *discouraging in further Endeavours* ; yet, I think, to a generous Mind it should rather be improved as *an Argument to form and execute new Projections* for this Purpose. And indeed perhaps the *Neglect of promoting Industry* among them is the chief *moral Reason* of so little being done to Purpose in forming their Manners. And therefore, I hope the Want of *wish'd for Success* in other Attempts will be *no Objection* with any that desire to be *Benefactors to Mankind*, against contributing their *Part to this*, which, I think, has so apparent Tendency to promote *Industry and Humanity* among a barbarous People. But tho' I think the Design here proposed has the probable Appearance of proving *successful*, yet I do not *flatter* my self with any Romantick *Expectations* of accomplishing *all* the Ends proposed at once ; nor is it to be *expected* in the ordinary Course of Things but that a great Deal of *Cost and Pains* with

with Respect to many particular Persons will be *lost*, This is what happens of Course in all Designs of this Nature : And yet, it is to be hoped, *some Good* will be done : Nor will the Benefactors loose their Reward with God, though the Design should not be crowned with all the happy *Success* might be wished and hoped for. The meer *Suspicion*, that the Design in the *Event* will prove *unsuccessful*, ought *not*, I think, to *discourage* the Attempt. How many are there, that *frustrate the very Grace of God itself* ? How many with Respect to whom *Christ has died in vain* ? And yet (to speak after the Manner of Men) *this* was no Hindrance to his laying down *his Life* for Sinners. He indeed has obtain'd all the Recompence in the Salvation of Souls, which he had in his Eye ; and *GOD all the Glory of his benevolent Purposes*. *He sees the Fruit of the Travail of his Soul, and is satisfied*. Nor will any *Benefactors* here loose the *Praise and Reward* of their gracious Intention and Endeavours. (See *Isa.* xlix. 1,—6.)

It may perhaps with some be an *Objection* against attempting any Thing of this Sort, that the *Indians are a base, ungrateful People*, insensible of Kindnesses done them. To this I *reply*, that though it be true, that this is the base, ungrateful Temper of *Indians*, yet I think it is rather an *Argument in Favour* of a Projection calculated to promote *Humanity* among them, than otherwise : For the *Objection* supposes them to be greatly *debased*, and shews the Need there is of *cultivating a Soil so barren*, or rather a Soil so *overrun* with hateful *Weeds*, and pricking *Thorns*. But whatever Weight *this* *Objection* might have with *others*, certainly it ought to have none *with a Christian*, who is commanded to *imitate the Beneficence of his HEAVENLY FATHER*, who *does Good to the Evil and Unthankful*. Had this Consideration sway'd the
Mind

Mind of our blessed SAVIOUR, would he ever have shed his *Blood* for those, who pursued his Life to Death? Nor did GOD refuse to *distinguish the Israelites* with his *peculiar Favours* from all the Families of the Earth, because they were an ungrateful *stiff-necked* and rebellious House.

I would *not* have it thought from *what* I have written above, that all that has been done here, to introduce Christianity and good Manners has proved altogether *in vain*; for, through the Grace of GOD, some *good Effects* have attended *our Labours* here: And, the *Indians seem now well prepared* for the Execution of what I have here proposed; which their *jealousy* would have been an effectual *Hindrance* to a few Years ago.

I shall be glad of the *Thoughts* of candid and ingenious *Gentlemen* communicated to me for the Improvement of the *Design* here proposed: And shall be ready to answer any *Queries* that may be made in Relation to it.

Thus, Sir, you have what I desire may be communicated to the *publick* from me. It will be well perhaps that you should preface this with some general *Account* of what Mr. *Hollis has done*, and what he *expected from this Country* in Prosecution of his Design; which was what suggested to me the Design proposed above. Some *Gentlemen* seem to be of Opinion, that this is *not an happy Time* to set such a Design on Foot; which for ought I know is true; but I do not think it best to *postpone* it on that Account. For who knows when we shall have a *better Time*? It is possible it may be *worse*. Nor would I wish to have your *blessed MASTER* take you from us, 'till you have help'd in laying this *Foundation* also for the Increase of Glory to his *Name* by promoting *this Scheme*, on which I confess *my Heart* is much set, and which will (I hope) prosper the better for *your* countenancing it.

[9]

I thank you for your *kind Letter*, and for the *Pamphlets* that accompanied it, and am,

with great Honour and Reverence

your most obliged

humble Servant

John Sergeant.

Hadley, August 9.

P.S. As I have tho't it necessary there should be some Persons propos'd to receive and disburse the Monies, that may be collected for the Purpose above, I have thought of the Hon. Col. *Stoddard*, and Col. *Porter*, the Rev. Mr. *Edwards* of *Northampton*, Major *Williams*, and Col. *Oliver Partridge* for this Purpose ; with whom I have conversed on the Affair, and have their *Consent* to be propos'd as Persons willing to take this Trouble on them. Which you may, if you please, signify to the World.

J. S.


B

Dr.



Dr. Colman's Return in Compliance with Mr. *Sergeant's* Request.

Boston, August 22. 1743.

 I having pleas'd my Rev. *Brother* thus *openly* to address and oblige me, I do most willingly publish his *Letter* : And if my *Name and Hand* can serve in any Measure to promote the *happy Foundation* which his Heart is set on, (I humbly hope under some special *Influence* from above) I give *them* with all my Heart; with Thanksgiving to GOD who many Years ago was pleas'd to incline my Honour'd *Friend* and Rev. *Brother* Mr. ISAAC HOLLIS (then of *London*) into those *Bounties* to us, which are now issuing in THIS PROPOSAL of a BOARDING-SCHOOL for the *more effectual Instruction and Education* of the *Indian Children* in the *Western Borders* of our PROVINCE.

It was about the Year 1731,2 that Mr. *Isaac Hollis*, (Nephew to *Thomas Hollis*, Esq; the great Benefactor to *Harvard College*, and soon after his pious *Uncle's* Decease) sent me a *hundred Pounds* Sterling, with his particular *Directions* how to distribute and lay it out ; adding, " that he had seen many of my *Letters* to his *Uncle* and his to *me*, which now led him into his *Writing* to me and this his Gift to us.

In the Year 1734, when he had seen the printed Account of the *Ordination* of Messieurs *Parker*,
Hinsdel

Hinsdel and *Secombe*, and their *Mission* to the *Indian Tribes* on the *Eastern* and *Western* Borders of *New-England*; *Mr. Hollis* then earnestly made me a most generous *Offer* of *twenty Pounds Sterling per Annum*, for *Ever*, for the Support of a *fourth Missionary*; but in Faithfulness I advis'd against such a Disposition of his Money; and as earnestly propos'd to him the Application of it for the Support of a *Missionary* thro' the wide Spread of the *desitute Settlements* I had heard of in the Province of *New-Jersey*; but he did not approve of my Advice.

Within two Years after this I heard of a very promising *Door* opening for the *Gospel* among the *Indian Tribe at Hossatonnoc*, and that a Person of *Mr. Sergeant's Character* for Piety and Learning, (then One of the *Tutors* in *Yale College* in *Connecticut*) was willing to quit his *Fellowship* and the *Prospects* he reasonably might have of one of the *best Settlements* our *Country* could afford him, in any of our vacant *Churches*; and to devote himself to the Glory of *CHRIST* in the Service of the Souls of those poor *Heathen Families*; Whereupon I immediately let *Mr. HOLLIS* know, that now I could freely and earnestly advise him to fix his *twenty Pounds Sterling per An.* for the Support of *this Mission*:

In *Answer* to this Motion, *Novemb. 19. 1736.* I receiv'd from *Mr. Hollis* his Bill on *Col. Wendel* to pay *56 l. Sterl.* for the Education of *twelve Indian Boys at Hossatonnoc*, under the Care of the *Rev. Mr. Sergeant*; and *Aug. 15. 1738.* I had a *second Order* from him for *343 l.* our Money; and again *May 17. 1740.* a *third Order* for *447 l. 9 s.*: (Errors excepted.)

Upon this gracious *Call*, and bountiful *Direction* of *Divine Providence*, *Mr. Sergeant* has been laying out himself gladly from Year to Year, in the Strength of *GOD*, in the Trust committed to him, with Caution, Care and Diligence, according to the Mea-

ture of *Wisdom* given him from *on High* ; whence every *good and perfect Gift* comes down, both the *Heart* and *Opportunity* for the doing Good.

On the *Sixth of May* 1743. Mr. *Sergeant* cover'd to me a *Letter* to be forwarded to the Rev. Mr. *Hollis*, giving him a particular *Account*, of the laying
 “ out his *Moneys* for the *Maintenance of his Boys* ;
 “ and of the *Methods he had used* for the *cultivating*
 “ *Humanity*, and introducing the *English Tongue and*
 “ *Manners among them*, and for their *Proficiency* in
 “ *Knowledge, Virtue and Piety* ; by which Means
 “ through the *Blessing of GOD*, several of them are
 “ affected with a *Sense and Relish of Divine Things* ;
 “ and *One* of them in particular has made *extraordi-*
 “ *nary Progress* in his *Learning*, and appears truly
 “ *pious*, and has been singularly *serviceable* to him,
 “ *assisting* him in his *Translations* *Expositions* and
 “ *Applications of the Scripture* ; and also very
 “ *helpful among the young Indians* in a *general reli-*
 “ *gious Concern* that has of late *prevailed* among
 “ them. Mr. *Sergeant* adds, “ that *this young In-*
 “ *Indian* is already well *qualified to keep School* among
 “ his *Countrymen* ; and within a few *Years* will prob-
 “ ably be fit to be a *Preacher of the Gospel* to them.
 “ *Two or three other* of his *Boys*, Mr. *Sergeant*
 “ says, are *serviceable in improving the rest* of the
 “ *Indians* in *Knowledge and Virtue* ; and he adds,
 —“ that it had been a *continued Series of unwearied*
 “ *Kindness to the Indians*, that had at length *intirely*
 “ *overcome their Jealousies and Suspicions* ; and gain'd
 “ an almost *universal Disposition* in them to receive
 “ *Instruction*.

He then inform'd Mr. *Hollis*, “ that he has had
 “ in his *Mind*, for some *Years*, to set up a *free board-*
 “ *ing School* for the *Education of Indian Children*,
 “ in which he proposes that they be brought
 “ up to *Labour* as well as *Learning* and the *Exer-*
 “ *cises of Devotion* ; with which *Propofal* the *Indians*
 “ seem

“ seem to be mightily taken ; being sensible of their
 “ *Folly* in their being formerly so *backward* to im-
 “ prove the Advantages put into their Hand.

Upon all Mr. *Sergeant* adds his “ *Prayer*, that Al-
 “ mighty *Power* may effect the merciful Purpose of
 “ Sovereign *Grace* among them ! — and then con-
 “ cludes with a free and noble *Declaration* to Mr.
 “ *Hollis* in the following Words,

“ Sir, As to your making any *Allowance to Me*,
 “ for my Care and Trouble, of which you speak in
 “ your very obliging *Letter* to me, I neither *ask*
 “ nor desire it, and I beg of you not to *think* of it ;
 “ for I should indeed be *ashamed* to accept any thing
 “ of you (though my stated Allowance is not large)
 “ but your *Intercessions* at the Throne of Grace for
 “ me, of which I stand in great Need. —“ We can
 “ never be *thankful* enough to You, under GOD,
 “ for having put it *in our Power to do so much* to
 “ promote our general Design. Through *your Li-*
 “ *beralities Thanksgivings abound to GOD*, who I am
 “ sure will *reward your Charity* ; and I doubt not
 “ but *Generations to come will bless your Name*, and
 “ you will find your Reward in *Eternity*. — —

John Sergeant.

I was so charm'd with the *Spirit* and Contents of
 this *Letter*, that I took a *Copy* of it before I *seal'd*
 it up and *forwarded* it to Mr. *Hollis* : And not only
 so, but *old* as I am, and unapt now to *transcribe*, yet
 I wrote several Copies, and sent *one* to an Honourable
 Member of the *Corporation at London*, who have
 the Distribution of the *Indian Fund* ; another to the
 worthy *Secretary* of their Honourable *Commissioners*
 here at *Boston* ; and yet a *third* to a Rev. *Minister* in
Scotland, if he sees good to communicate it to the
Secretary of the Honourable *Society* for propagating
 Christian Knowledge at *Edinburgh* ; and after all I
 publish'd it in the *Weekly Christian History* at *Boston*,
 No. 19. So that I have in a Manner *prevented*, and
 abundantly

abundantly answered Mr. *Sergeant's Request* to me in his present Letter before it came ; and gone beyond all he could imagine or expect from me, in way of prefacing and recommending his pious Design and Proposal. And I can truly add, that I shall account my self honour'd by GOD in my advanced Age, if I may finish my Course of Services to my Country, and the Churches of CHRIST here, by ministring now under my dear younger Brother, in this his fervent devoting his Life and Powers to the Glory of GOD in the Salvation of the Heathen.

I even dare therefore to recommend Him and his proposed Boarding-School, not only to the pious and Charitable among our selves, nor only to those of the Denomination of New-England in our Nation and Provinces ; but also (might it not be thought presumptuous) even to the most Honourable SOCIETIES for propagating the Gospel and of Christian Knowledge in London and Edinburgh ; for their generous Assistances to a Projection truly Catholic, and without respect of Parties ; which I hope the DIVINE PROVIDENCE may be laying by the Hands of his Servants, Mr. Hollis and Mr. Sergeant, in this obscure Corner of our Province at Stockbridge, alias Hoffsatonoc, for a more effectual Entrance among the Indians than we have yet seen.

But there are two or three Things more, that I find my self obliged to hint at, before I conclude the present Writing.

One is (as Mr. Sergeant requests of me in his Letter) to intimate to the Public Mr. Hollis his Expectations from Us here in New-England. And indeed in several of his Letters to me he has wrote with some Discouragement of Spirit on this Head ; " Why We, " a People of such Name for Religion, do not exert our selves more in Prosecution of like Essays " for a more effectual gospelizing the Heathen round " about us ? And now that He has advanc'd as he " has

“ has done for the *Education* of a Number at *Hoffa-*
 “ *tonnoc* ; he hears of *none* of our rich Men falling
 “ in with their *Assistances*.

This has been Matter of *Stumbling* to him, and I
 with the *Block* may be now removed by the Contri-
 butions of many to the *School* proposed : which may
 be an *Odour of a sweet Smell, a Sacrifice acceptable*
and pleasing to GOD.

Another Thing suggested by Mr. *Sergeant*, and a
 most *wise* and *necessary* one in the present Case, is—
 “ his *taking in Girls as well as Boys*, if Providence
 “ succeed the Design, and a *Fund* sufficient to car-
 “ ry it on can be procured : I must needs add on
this Head, that this Proposal is a Matter of absolute
Necessity, wherein we are not left at *Liberty* either
 as Men or Christians ; for there cannot be a *Propagati-*
on of Religion among any People without an equal Re-
 gard to *both Sexes* ; not only because *Females* are alike
 precious *Souls*, form'd for GOD and Religion as much
 as the *Males* ; but also because the *Care* for the Souls
 of *Children in Families*, and more especially in those of
low Degree, lies chiefly upon the *Mothers* for the first
seven or eight Years: Which is an Observation or *Re-*
mark, which I had the Honour to make unto my dear
 and honour'd ancient Friend *Henry Newman Esq*; Se-
 cretary to the Honourable and Reverend SOCIETY
 for promoting Christian Knowledge ; which when he
 had communicated to THEM, they put it into *print*,
 and sent it to the Directors of the 1764 *Schools* ; (if I
 have not miscounted) that so a *greater Proportion of*
Girls might be taken into them to receive a religious
 Education for the sake of *their Posterity*, and therein
 for the more effectual answering the very End of their
*Charity-Schools**. By which *Instance* I received the fol-
 lowing *Instruction* “ what an *unknown* and *untho't* of

* See the printed Account of the *Society* Anno 1738.
 P. 26.

Good, a Man may do by a *single* and occasional *right Tho't* or *Line* ; it proving in the *Case* before me, as if I had wrote 1764 *Letters* to the Directors of so many *Schools*, for the Service of *Posterity*, and in favour of *female Children* : And what added a *thousand-fold* more to the *Virtue* and *Force* of my *Line*, was the *Approbation* of so *venerable a Body* of *Gentlemen*, and their *Recommendation* of it to the *Observation* of the *Overseers* of their respective *Schools*.

I have now only to add upon Mr. *Sergeant's* Postscript, — that the *Gentlemen* whom he has *nam'd* to receive and disburse the *Moneys* which may be given for the building and support of his *Boarding-School*, are *Persons of known Character* among us for *Integrity* and *Honour* ; to whom I only wish may be added the Rev. Mr. *Stephen Williams* of *Springfield* ; whom it pleas'd GOD to use so much as a *zealous and laborious Instrument* of the Settlement of the Gospel at *Hoffatonnoc*.

Now *Thanks* be to GOD for his *Unspeakable Gift*, a right *liberal Heart and Hand*, in one Part of his *Church* and another. No *Tongue* of Man can fully *speake* of it ! or enough celebrate it ! *Unspeakable* is the *Good* done to the World by it ! *unspeakable* is the *Glory* redounding to the Name of CHRIST from it ! and also the *Good* to *our selves* in it and from it is *unspeakable*, both thro' the *Life* that now is, and in that which is to come ! Only the *Day of CHRIST* can reveal the *Glories and Joys* awaiting it thro' a blessed *ETERNITY* : “—LORD, when saw we THEE hungry and fed THEE ? or thirsty and gave THEE Drink ? —Verily in as much as you did it unto ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE, ye have done it unto ME.

Benjamin Colman.

Reprinted, May, 1929, from
the original in the library of
Thea Heye, New York City,
in an edition of two hun-
dred copies, of which this is
Number 59