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LETTERS

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FROM THE

Rev. SAMUEL DAVIES, &c.

S H E W I N G

The State of Religion in *Virginia*,
particularly among the Negroes.

L I K E W I S E

An Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in LONDON to his Friend in the Country,

Containing some Observations on the same.

As cold Water to a thirsty Soul, so is good News from a far Country. PROV. xxv. 25.

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ing them; and when I can discover the Feeling, and Practice of a *Christian*, I think them proper members of a *Christian Church*, although they should be very ignorant of many of its important doctrines.

There is, however, a number of them, who, I have not the least reason to doubt, are the *genuine Children of Abraham* by faith; and some of them seem to have made a greater progress in experimental Religion, than many sincere Christians of a fairer colour. Some of them are, indeed, astonishing monuments of divine Grace. There are *ten* of them in one quarter (so we call the little houses where the Negroes dwell) who, I have reason to hope, are all, or at least, nine in ten, sincerely and zealously engaged in the doctrines and duties of our holy Religion. This, indeed, is an instance, which, I am afraid, can hardly be paralleled, among either white or black, in these Parts. But there are other instances very remarkable, though not so surprizing—

SAMUEL DAVIES.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev.
Mr. *Davies* at *Hanover* in *Virginia*
to Mr. B. F. Feb. 7, 1757.

I HAVE allowed my Friend Mr. *Wright* a Part of the Books I have at sundry times received, to be distributed in his congregation, where there are uncommon appearances of the progress of Religion: Some time ago
I re-

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I received a Letter from him with the following Paragraph, intended to be communicated to the Society.

“ I take this opportunity to express my
“ gratitude for the Books you sent me at
“ sundry times this Spring, before I had any
“ claim as a Member of the SOCIETY to
“ which I now have the honour to belong.
“ And I desire to adore God for raising up
“ such a spirit of disinterested and pious generosity in so many in *Great Britain*, as
“ to contrive so noble a scheme for promoting *religious Knowledge* among those who
“ were like to be destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

“ You may inform them that my infant
“ congregation, in these uttermost parts of
“ the earth, is like to receive an everlasting
“ advantage by their pious Charity. I have
“ had no opportunity of discovering the success of the books, except in two instances.
“ The *first*, is a woman, singularly inquisitive; who, upon reading *The Compassionate Address*, told me, she had got so much advantage by it, that she would give ten
“ Pistoles for it, rather than part with it:
“ The *other* is a boy, who had just finished
“ his servitude: He could hardly read a word,
“ and was not able to buy a book, but hearing that I had books to distribute gratis,
“ he applied to me for some, and the books
“ I gave him, with the serious advices that
“ attended them, were so far blessed to him,
“ that

“ that he is now under promising serious im-
 “ pressions.”

“ In short, Sir, I cannot express the plea-
 “ sing expectations I have that God will do
 “ great things in these remote parts by the
 “ *diffusive Benevolence* of the Society, and
 “ other good Christians. Pray convey this
 “ account to the Society, and you will lay
 “ an additional obligation, upon

Cumberland County,
 Sept. 7, 1756.

Yours, &c.
John Wright.

I have also intrusted my favourite friend
 and next neighbour, Mr. *Todd*, with the dis-
 tribution of a number in his congregation.
 And he tells me, that *The Compassionate Ad-
 dress* was likely to be of great service in a
 particular neighbourhood.

I will add one instance more in the bounds
 of my congregation, and that is, a Gentle-
 man who accidentally met with the same *ex-
 cellent Address*; and when he cast his eye into
 it, it so engaged his attention, that he could
 not put it out of his hands, until he had read
 it through; and he told one of my Friends,
 that it gave him the *most solemn* and *affecting*
 thoughts of eternal things, that ever he had
 in his life. May his goodness not be as the
 morning cloud! *That little Book, Dodderidge's*
Rise and Progress, and *Baxter's Call*, are, I
 think, the most popular and useful Books
 among the white People in *Virginia* —

SAMUEL DAVIES.

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