



PROCESSION OF SAINT MIODJIN, AT TOKIO, JAPAN.

SAINT MIODJIN.

BY THE REV. GEORGE COCHRAN.

THE annual festival in honour of Saint Miodjin, the patron saint of Tokio, the capital city of Japan, is celebrated on the 15th day of the 3rd month. This saint was an ancient hero named *Heishinno Masanado*, and was deified as *Kanda Miodjin*. The temple erected to his worship stands on a hill near the old Confucian College, in the centre of the city, and is visited by pilgrims and travellers from various parts of the Empire.

A leading feature of this festival is the procession, shown in our picture. Many distinguished persons were once in the habit of being present, as well as thousands of citizens and country folk. The great stands and area of the Temple grounds are crowded with spectators, all in the gayest of holiday attire—bright scarfs and coloured ornaments flashing in the sun. Young and old of all ranks and classes mingle together, every countenance lighted up with the simple joy of wonderful good nature. The utmost courtesy and order prevails all day long throughout the crowd. The bobbing heads of little children, with bright eyes and merry prattle, carried on the backs of parents and nurses, adds much to the interest of the scene. The elder children have free course through the multitude, charmed with the sights that in wondrous variety, weird, grotesque, and comical, abound on every side. The Japanese take the greatest delight in ministering to the pleasure of their children. The music of flutes, guitars, and singing girls, mingled with the roll of drums, together with the posturing of dancers; the antics of acting monkeys, acrobats, and story tellers, give life and movement to the scene; while candy stalls and toy shops, apparently without end, are objects of ceaseless attraction to both young and old.

But we must not forget the procession. One part of it, not shown in the picture, is the car of Saint Miodjin—a clumsy, ponderous vehicle, drawn by hundreds of the faithful, who have harnessed them-

selves to it by means of straw ropes, and with groans and noises the most hideous, are bawling their very best. Just behind, as seen in the picture, is a large banner laced to a pole fastened to a frame, and carried by devotees. This banner consists of a web of white cotton cloth several yards long, covered with sacred legends written in Chinese characters. A similar banner, only much larger, is seen a little to the left, fastened to a permanent mast in front of the great stand. Just behind, borne on a platform, is a hideous colossal head of the demon over whom the saint triumphed in his conflict with the evil powers. The people gaze with horror on the gigantic horns and fierce countenance of this monster, and point out to one another its bloody eyes, its scarlet skin, and horrible jaws. To increase the effect of this spectacle, the priests of the temple strike their gongs, blow their trumpets, and make a terrible noise. A little further back some are carrying an enormous axe, edge upwards, with which the victorious Miodjin cut off the monster's head.

All this is dark superstition and gross idolatry. The people who for ages celebrated these festivals in honour of heroes and saints, knew nothing of the one Saviour, and of the only living and true God. But, we are glad to say, this is no longer the case. Last summer, in a beautiful park just behind the temple of Miodjin, the missionaries of our Church, assisted by Christian friends, held a camp meeting, and thousands heard the Gospel and listened to the music of Christian hymns and prayer to God, in the name of Jesus. All round about, the missionaries have established preaching stations, and the light of divine truth is dissipating the darkness of heathen error and idolatry. Let us pray that the time may soon come when the idols shall be utterly abolished, and their unholy festivals shall cease; when the Christian Sabbath and spiritual worship shall purify and brighten the life of the people, and Japan shall be "a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of our God."

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLES.

A. D. 65.] LESSON XI. Dec. 10.

THE HEAVENLY INHERITANCE.

1 Peter 1. 1-12. Memory verses, 3-5.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.—Col. 1. 12.

OUTLINE.

1. The Inheritance of Faith, v. 1-5.
2. The Trial of Faith, v. 6-8.
3. The End of Faith, v. 9-12.

PLACE.

This epistle was probably written from the city of Babylon.

EXPLANATIONS.

"To the strangers scattered throughout"—Better, "to the elected aliens of the Dispersion;" that is, to the Christians who are foreign-born Jews. Most of those to whom this epistle was addressed had been converted by Paul's ministry. "Elect"—This word, meaning "chosen ones," was a name applied to the members of the Christian Church. The Revised Version places it where it properly belongs, immediately after the name of our Lord in the first line, "to the elect who are sojourners." Election in scriptural sense, is, "God's doing anything that our merit or power has no part in."—*Wesley*. "Sprinkling of the blood"—This is an allusion to the Hebrew ritual. (See Hebrews 12. 34.) A daily sprinkling is here alluded to. "A lively hope"—A living hope. It has life in itself; it gives life, and it looks for life as its object. "An inheritance"—Eternal life belongs to the children of God. "Incorruptible"—Not having within the germs of death. "Undeiled"—Unsusceptible to stain. "Reserved in heaven"—Secured from alienation. No one else can receive your heavenly inheritance. "Who are kept"—The inheritance is reserved for you; you are preserved for it. "Ye are in heaviness"—Better, "Ye were grieved." "More precious than of gold"—By the action of fire, gold is separated from alloy, and is proved to be gold by enduring the action of the fire. So genuine faith is tested by trials and temptation. "The end of your faith"—The issue or reward of your faith. "The prophets have inquired and searched"—They knew in a general way about the coming of Jesus Christ, but much never known by them was made plain to the early Christians, and has been taught to us. "Angels desire to look into"—"Stoop down to."

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we taught that—

1. In the severest trials, the Christian may be happy?
2. Under the most powerful temptations, the Christian is kept by the power of God?
3. For each Christian, an inheritance is reserved in heaven?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

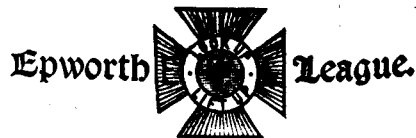
1. Of what future blessing have Christians a lively hope? "An inheritance incorruptible." 2. Where is this inheritance? "Reserved in heaven for us." 3. What hope have we of getting it? "We are kept by the power of God for it." 4. To whom does this inheritance belong? "To all who with full heart believe in Jesus." 5. What is the Golden Text? "Giving thanks unto the Father," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The second coming of Christ.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

Was this humiliation unto death necessary? Yes; to fulfil the purpose of God, which was declared in the prediction of Scripture. Luke 24. 46.—And he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer.

The Lord's best blessings are often things we need but do not want.



W. H. WITHROW, Secretary for Canada.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPICS.

DECEMBER 10, 1893.

Junior Epworth League.

OUR HEAVENLY HOPE.—1 John 3. 3; Titus 2. 13; Heb. 3. 6; Col. 1. 27; Rom. 5. 4, 5; Heb. 6. 11-19; 1 Thess. 4. 13, 14.

Junior E. L. of O. E.

HOW SHOULD WE SHOW OUR LOVE FOR JESUS?—John 14. 21-24; 1 Pet. 1. 8.

WHAT IT COST.

A METHODICAL man died in Berlin recently at the age of seventy-three. When eighteen years old he began keeping a record which he continued for fifty-two years, which is the best commentary we have seen on the life of a mere worldling. His life was not consecrated to a high ideal. The book shows that in fifty-two years this "natural man" had smoked 628,715 cigars, of which he had received 43,694 as presents, while for the remaining 585,021 he had paid about \$10,433. In fifty-two years, according to his book-keeping, he had drunk 28,786 glasses of beer and 36,096 glasses of spirits, for all of which he spent \$5,340. The diary closes with these words: "I have tried all things, I have seen many, I have accomplished nothing." A stronger sermon could not be preached than to put this testimony against that of the first missionary, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

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