



DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

The Text on the Wall.

EVERY day, or blue or gray,
Cloud or sun, as may befall,
Turn I, with the earliest ray
To my text-roll on the wall;
Word of comfort, word of cheer,
Word of courage waits me here.

Sometimes 'tis a whisper sweet,
Sparkling like a drop of dew!
Just to sit at Jesus' feet,
Thence my loving Lord to view.
And I meet the day untried,
With the Master at my side.

Sometimes 'tis a bugle note
Crisp and clear, serene and high,
Or a song that seems to float
Like a lark's from out the sky.
Sometimes 'tis a battle-call—
That brief text upon the wall.

Now, in ringing phrase and terse
From the lips of prophet old,
Meets my eye a warning verse,
Stern, defiant, eager, bold!
Nerved to dare whatever foe,
Forward in that strength I go.

Sometimes when my spirits droop,
And the gathering tears are nigh,
Radiant as an angel troop,
Flits a single promise by—
Promise, herald of a train,
Swift to charm away the pain.

Every day, or blue or gray,
Sun or cloud, as may befall,
Turn I, with the dawning ray
To my text-roll on the wall;
Word of solace, word of cheer,
Word of faith awaits me here.

THE Methodist mission to the Flat-head Indians has been revived by the energetic work of the Rev. W. Tate, who has been for some years engaged in establishing a mission among the Bella-Bella Indians.

THE wife of the Rev. John McLean, B.A., missionary to the Blood Indians, near Fort McLeod, has established a sewing school among the Indian women, partly with a view of teaching them how to cut and make garments, and partly to provide necessary clothing for women and children, many of whom are very destitute. She applies for a supply of material such as can be used for the above purpose.

The Dark Side of Heathen Life.

BY REV. D. H. BADLEY, D.D.

THERE is a dark side; all heathenism is dark. Most of us think we have a fair idea of the state of the heathen world, and yet without a residence in a heathen land it is impossible to have this. Things are a hundred-fold worse than we can imagine.

In India the so-called sacred writings of the Hindus are filled not only with inconsistencies but with stories of the most vulgar and obscene character. The influence of these books upon the Hindu people is only too apparent. If the gods could do these things, if they could indulge in theft, lying and all forms of immorality, why may not the people? These books, if they could be translated and published in our land, would be at once suppressed; and yet in India they are widely circulated and exert their pernicious influence upon old and young alike. The standard of morality they teach is fit for devils, not men. The wonder is that they have retained their hold upon so many million people as long as they have. They are their own refutation.

The priests are avaricious. Many have become independently rich by their share of the plunder; in not a few instances these priests have been found in the English law-courts prosecuting each other for interfering in their business; rich and poor, pay tribute and from their offerings the priest amasses wealth, often riding his elephant as if he were a king.

At the time of the great bathing festivals, when hundreds of thousands of devout Hindus approach the sacred Ganges to bathe and worship, the banks are preempted by priests and holy men, "sons of the Ganges," as they are called, each of whom occupies a certain number of feet upon the bank and endeavours in anything but priestly style to get hold of as many people as possible, each worshipper paying him tribute. In these scenes an amount of noisy, impudent effort is displayed

which can be equalled only by the donkey-boys of Egypt as they surround the bewildered traveller and compete for the fare. At these festivals the receipts of many of the priests are sufficiently large to support them during the ensuing year. It is not strange that these men in every possible way endeavor to prevent the people from becoming Christians.

Shameful scenes occur at many of the temples. Innocent girls are married to the idol and make the temple their home, supported by the priests supposed to be celibates; they go from the temple to houses of ill-fame. Could the temples of India, many of them beautiful in appearance and rich in finish, testify to the scenes of adultery and wickedness which they have witnessed, Hinduism would be undone. In worship, things unmentionable are made the objects of adoration.

Bishop Thompson, in speaking of the 330,000,000 gods worshipped by the Hindus, says: "The character ascribed to them, and the devotions devised for them, coming from the human heart, where lurk evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, etc., must be corrupting and degrading. No wonder that at length thieves and drunkards and adulterers and beasts become gods, and riot and lasciviousness crown the ceremonies of the sanctuary. . . . Indian idolatry has touched bottom. As I stood in the holy Benares, every sense disgusted, and every feeling merged in indignation, contemplating the stupidity, the odiousness, the obscenity, the discord, the beastliness of that centre of pagan worship, I thought, Surely it can get no lower without opening the mouth of hell. I exclaimed within myself, 'Almighty God! to what depths of darkness and depravity are thy rational creatures capable of descending when they turn away from the revelation of love and mercy!' As I looked upon a *fakir* seated by the Ganges, naked, haggard, worn to a skeleton, and covered with ashes, I thought I knew what it is to be damned."

Dr. Samuel Johnson.

BY THE REV. J. H. ROBINSON.

Abridged from an article in the *Methodist Magazine* for December, 1876.

At the head of the literary men of the eighteenth century stands the venerable though ungainly form of SAMUEL JOHNSON. A man with imperfections which charity will easily overlook; with superstitions which our reason condemns; with an irritability of temper and a dogmatism of tone which often made him rude and unbearable; but for all that he was a man—a great-souled, highly-gifted man; and when the crust was off him, and his real nature became visible in all its breadth of feeling and generosity, his defects—or, perhaps, we ought to say his peculiarities—were forgotten, and the great qualities of his mind and character called forth the admiration and affection of all who came in contact with him.

But why write of Samuel Johnson at this remote period? Our answer is that genius, learning, and moral worth are like a diamond which, the more it is seen the more it pleases and is admired; and further, Samuel Johnson was a "helper" and fellow-labourer in the cause of morality and Christian truth at a time when, in his station in life, there were few who had any

serious convictions about sacred things, and very many who made themselves merry at all that savoured of earnestness in religion and decorum in social life. We "greet" him, therefore, as Paul desired Aquila and Priscilla to be greeted, "as a helper in Christ Jesus." He lived in the time of Fielding and Smollett, and he, like them, had to subsist by his pen; but in what a higher and purer region than theirs did his lofty intellect range! He lived and he wrote in such wise that he was admired and visited by Mr. Wesley. The pure and cultivated Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Hannah More, and Miss Burney were among his choicest friends. Whenever he had grace enough to tie his garters on his stockings, button the knees of his nether garments, put on his shoes with silver buckles, and, more than all, a clean shirt and powdered wig, he was welcomed to any circle which he chose to enter; and his conversation was devoured with greater voracity than he devoured his victuals or drank his sixteen or twenty cups of tea. For fifteen years he was the guest—always welcome, and at free commons—of Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, of Streatham. It was deemed an honour to receive him into their house, and there, as elsewhere, philosophers, poets, statesmen, and cultivated men and women in other walks of life, listened to his utterances with rapt attention and admiration.

A CATHEDRAL CITY.

But there is another reason why we notice Dr. Johnson. His works, although a mine of thought and wisdom, have become neglected by all but a few, on account of the style in which they are written. It is not English nor is it Latin, but a mixture of the two, rather uncouth to modern ears. The Doctor was a stately gentleman—if not always in his dress, at least in his notions of personal dignity. He was born at Lichfield—an episcopal city; and even from his childhood his senses were awed by the sight of doctors, proctors, and all the retinue of an episcopal residence. Those only who have lived in such a city can realize the effect which such surroundings have on the general temper and manners of the people. Lichfield now produces hosiery for young and old; "clouds" for ladies' wear in winter; and an endless number of articles for warmth and comfort; and we, at least, bless the people of Lichfield for all the warm things they produce. But in Johnson's time there was none of this. The Bishop, the Bishop's palace, the cathedral, the assizes and quarter sessions, and now and then a county ball or a review of troops, were all that the people saw or had to live by. Manufacturing industries make people independent, and sometimes saucy, and when you become independent and saucy, speech adapts itself to feeling, style becomes short and snappish. It takes but little trouble to say, "I am as good as you;" but to him who lives under the shadow of a cathedral, who hears at least twice a day the words, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church;" who hears long-robed priests and surpliced choristers chanting litanies, and sees them performing genuflections,—no wonder, especially when their bread and butter are also in question, that the tone of feeling and the manners of the whole people become quieter and more respectful, and it is a moot question whether "I am as good as you" or not. At all