

How Sam Johnson Wrote an Epitaph.

Louis Francois Roubilliac, the eminent French sculptor, spent considerable portion of his life in England. He was on very intimate terms with the notables of that country in the first half of last century. One day the famous sculptor was introduced to the illustrious but eccentric Johnson. He was then living in Gough Square, Fleet street,—the literary resort of London. The artist's object was to prevail on Johnson to write an epitaph for a monument on which he was engaged for Westminster Abbey. Johnson received the stranger with much civility, especially as he was introduced to him by Sir Joshua Reynolds. He took him up into the garret, which the prodigy of learning used to consider as his library. Besides a lot of books all covered with dust, there was in his room an old crazy deal table and an old arm chair, with only three legs. In this chair Johnson seated himself, after having placed it securely against the table on that side where the leg was deficient. He then took up his pen and demanded what his visitor wanted him to write. Roubilliac began a bombastic and ridiculous harangue on what he thought should be the kind of epitaph most proper for the purpose, all of which the doctor very patiently wrote down, in his usually fine and strictly correct language. The conceited Frenchman continued to dictate. Johnson, in the conscious superiority of his powers, finally tired and broke out in an angry and peremptory tone of voice: "Come, come, sir, let us have no more of this bombastic, ridiculous rodomontade, but let me know in simple language, the name, character, and quality of the person whose epitaph you intend to have me write." It is fortunate for our irrepressible interviewer that Dr. Johnson lived a hundred years ago.—*National Repository for May.*

Some Signs.

Solomon said, many centuries ago, "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and it be right."

Some people think that children have no character at all. On the contrary, an observing eye sees in these young creatures the signs of what they are likely to be for life.

When I see a little boy slow to go to school and glad of every excuse to neglect his book, I think it is a sign that he will be a dunce.

When I see a boy in haste to spend every penny as soon as he gets it, I think it is a sign that he will be a spendthrift.

When I see a boy hoarding up his pennies, and unwilling to part with them for any good purpose, I think it is a sign that he will be a miser.

When I see a boy or girl looking out for themselves and dislike to share good things with others, I think it is a sign that the child will grow up a very selfish person.

When I see boys and girls quarreling, I think it is a sign that they will be violent and hateful men and women.

When I see a little boy willing to take strong drink, I think it is a sign he will be a drunkard.

When I see a little boy smoking or chewing tobacco, I think it is a sign that he will soon be guilty of other filthy habits.

When I see a boy who never prays I think it is a sign that he will be a profane and profligate man.

When I see a child obedient to its parents, I think it is a sign of great future blessings from almighty God.

When I see a boy fond of the Bible I think it is a sign that he will be a pious and happy man.

And though great changes sometimes take place in the character, yet as a general rule these signs do not fail.

The Three Sieves.

"O mamma," cried little Blanche Philpott, "I heard such a tale about Edith Howard! I did not think she could be so very naughty. One—"

"My dear," interrupted Mrs. Philpott, "before you continue, we will see if your story will pass the three sieves."

"What does that mean, mamma," inquired Blanche.

"I will explain it. In the first place, is it true?"

"I suppose so; I got it from Miss White, and she is a great friend of Edith's."

"And how does she show her friendship by telling tales of her? In the next place, though you can prove it to be true, is it kind?"

"I did not mean to be unkind, but I am afraid it was. I would not like Edith to speak of me as I have of her."

"And is it necessary?"

"No, of course, mamma; there was no need for me to mention it at all."

"Then put a bridle on your tongue, if we can't speak well, speak not at all."—*Good Words.*

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VOLUNTARY
TESTIMONY.

[Extract from the Baltimore "American," December 21, 1878.]

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9-16-17

MISCELLANEOUS.



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