A Johnson Sampler (Nonpareil Book)

By SAMUEL JOHNSON

David R. Godine Publisher June 2002, 2002. Paper Back. Book Condition: New. Curwen's opening sentiment on Johnson in the introduction to this exceedingly quotable miscellany begs to be borrowed: 'A Mrs. Cotterell one day asked Samuel Johnson to introduce her to a celebrated writer. 'Dearest Madam' he replied, 'you had better let it alone; the best part of every author is in general to be found in his book, I assure you.' This statement is not true of Johnson. Johnson the man is greater than Johnson the writer.' More craftsman than literary genius, Johnson wrote to earn his pay-hardly for the 'love' of writing. Almost given up for dead at his own birth, Johnson faced a number of afflictions early in life that set the pattern for later afflictions-poverty, defective schooling, melancholy, and chronic hypochondria-through which he eventually persevered and found success. Curwen has given us Johnson himself, collecting commonsensical and arresting phrases from his major works (The Rambler, The Idler, Rasselas, and A Journey) as well as letters, poems, and overheard conversations. Johnson was known to discuss everything except history (which he hated)-reading, writing, wooing, wedding, business, price fixing, politics, law, wealth, teaching, learning, pleasure, punishments, and (in Curwen's...

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