

of them have been unable to say "No." Sometimes when they see other people's money left unguarded they take it—that is, steal it. They are unable to say "No." At other times they do wrong things because they cannot say "No."

We say that any one who is able to say "No" when it ought to be said has self-control. A boy or girl who can say "No" has control over himself or herself. You know what the big word "temptation" means. It is a fine day, and you are sent with a message, and instead of taking the message quickly you loiter by the way. You wish to hear a band play, or to see something in a shop-window, or the soldiers are marching past and you wish to look at them, and so you do not carry your message quickly, for you have not said "No" to your wishes. You have given way to temptation and shown that you are not able to control yourself.

Or again, for instance, another boy asks you to go with him to a place where you ought not to go, or to do something wrong. You know it is wrong, but again you cannot say "No," and you do what he asks you. It is said you are led astray. Hundreds of men are in prison because their love of pleasure, or of intoxicating drink, or of getting money led them astray. They could not say "No." They did wrong and never thought of what would happen: they had no self-control.

Now, boys and girls, you all wish to be happy, to be good citizens, and to get on in life. There is nothing wrong in trying to be happy, in striving to be good, and in desiring to get on in the world—to be "healthy, wealthy, and wise"—but you will not be happy or good or get on in the world if you cannot say "No" at the right time. Before you do anything ask yourself the question, "Is it right?" Let none of your feelings or wishes, or, as they are sometimes called, passions, control you. You must control yourself. It is perhaps hard to do so, but you must try, try, and try again till you are masters of yourselves.

A very old poet—he lived in the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century (from 1568 to 1639)—has pictured to us "a happy life," and I quote you the first and last verses of his short poem. He said,—

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill.

This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall:
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And, having nothing, yet hath all.

This was Sir Henry Wotton's description of "a hap-

py life." Robert Burns knew the good of self-control, but spoiled his life for lack of it. He said,—

Prudent, cautious self-control
Is wisdom's root.

It is the foundation and the beginning of wisdom. Do you wish to be happy? Be able to say "No" and to control yourself. Do you wish to be wise? Learn to say "No" when you are tempted to do wrong. Do you wish to become good citizens and to be of service to your country? Do not be afraid to say "No" if you are asked or feel inclined to do anything that is wrong. All of us need to exercise self-control and self-denial. You know what self-denial means: it signifies denying ourselves some present pleasure for our own future benefit or to help or benefit others. This habit of self-denial strengthens the character of those who practise it. Without self-control and self-denial you cannot be useful or good citizens.

If you learn to control yourself; if you can think before you act; if you can say "No" to any and every wrong or evil suggestion, you will have secured for yourself the respect of your companions, and shown that you have succeeded in overcoming the temptations and weaknesses which lead astray many people, old and young, and prevent them from doing their duty to their neighbours and their country.

THE IRISH CLAIM ROBIN ADAIR

It is a pretty safe venture to affirm that the great majority of us have always considered "Robin Adair" a Scotch song. It was so listed in numerous folios. But now, unless otherwise proved, we have to accept the claim that the piece is really of Irish origin. Reference books on music credit its composition to an Irish harper O'Daly, who is said to have loved a colleen, Ellen O'Cavanagh. But her family objected. After a necessary absence, O'Daly came home to find his sweetheart forced by her parents to promise to marry another man.

The disturbed lover composed a new air Eileen Aroon, claimed to be the melody of "Robin Adair," and, at the wedding festivities, at the bride's request, he played the new air while under the disguise of a harper. Eileen recognized in the supposed travelling musician the person of O'Daly and eloped with him that night.

This melody was printed, it is said, as an Irish air as early as almost two hundred years ago, but later appeared in collections of Scotch songs. It was the custom in those days of wandering Irish musicians to take trips to Scotland and that is perhaps how the air was introduced to Scotland. However, there is no need for controversy over the origin of "Robin Adair," for it is a good song we can all enjoy in any land.

It is a folk song that is wider than any national boundaries.

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