

## Children's Department

## Sunday Talks.

BY H. Y.

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."—St. Luke xvi. 13.

A boy once said to me about this text: "Mammon, oh! that means money—wealth, doesn't it? That doesn't apply to us. Children don't love money, so they don't serve mammon." Don't you think they do, boys and girls? Suppose we look into the matter a little before you come to a positive conclusion. Mammon is a Syriac word, and it means worldliness as well as it does money or wealth. Now what is worldliness? It is being so full of a love for the pleasure and amusements of the world that love for God is pushed to one side; sometimes, alas, entirely out of the heart. Do boys and girls never get to care more for pleasure than for God? Don't think that, because you are a little boy or a little girl, you need not be on your guard against worldliness.

Temptations come to all, to children as well as to grown up people, so the little soldiers must be just as much on the alert as the larger ones. Our Lord says, "No servant can serve two masters" at the same time. He means that no one can love Him and at the same time love the things of the world. Now by this He does not mean that boys and girls are not to have fun or to enjoy themselves, but what He does mean is that those who put pleasure or fun before the love or worship of God are not serving Him, but worldliness. Some boys and girls (some grown people, too) are trying to carry on this double worship. They don't mean to slight their Lord, but they let the love of pleasure get such control over them that after a while they

forget to "render unto God the things that are God's."

I have known boys to play ball right up to the Sunday-school door on Sunday morning, and talk 'cycling or tennis or some other game every chance they got while the lesson was going on, and in church whisper and smile, and even nudge each other while on their knees. Yet those boys prided themselves on their record for regular attendance, and on the number of verses which they had learned from the Bible, and they would have been very much surprised, even indignant, had they been told that they were serving worldliness rather than God. Girls, too, I am sorry to say, often forget for whose sake they go to Sunday-school and church, and whisper, or giggle or take notes of their neighbours' doings.

These boys and girls fancy they are serving God by their attendance at Sunday-school and in His house, but do you think such half-hearted, divided service is of value to Him? No one would believe in the loyalty of a soldier who undertook to serve the enemy as well as his own side in the time of war. He would be true to neither, and if he went over entirely to the enemy he would be considered a traitor to his cause. And when those who call themselves "children of God," followers of Christ, give their best service to worldliness they are traitors to their Lord.

I have heard that the dear lad who bore the name of his grandfather Abraham Lincoln, regarded it as a great honour, as indeed it was. He never allowed the name to be contracted to Abe, considering that beneath his dignity, and he tried with earnest conscientiousness throughout his short life to be as like his namesake as possible, and so to live as befitted the honourable name he bore. There is a lesson for us in young Abraham Lincoln's love and reverence for his grandfather's memory and name. We bear the name of Christ as Christians, the name of the only perfect Man the world has ever known, the name of our Lord and Saviour; let us see to it that we give Him the undivided love and service which are His due. Be careful, dear children, not to let your play or school, or any earthly interest, draw your love away from your Lord.

We all need to ask for help that we may give Him our best love and undivided worship; so let us pray together: "O, God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that, by reason of the frailty of our nature, we cannot always stand upright: Grant to us strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."—Churchman.

## Katy's Sacrifice.

John Griffith, a rich English manufacturer, sat in a room in his elegant mansion one day in autumn. To judge by his face, his reflections were of an agreeable nature.

"The prospect is," he said to himself, "that my income for the present year will reach fifteen thousand pounds. That is a tidy sum for one who started as a poor boy. And I am not so old, either. Just turned of sixty! There is more than one nobleman in the kingdom that would be glad of John Griffith's income. My Katy will have a rich dowry."

He was interrupted here by the entrance of a servant.

"Mr. Griffith," he said, "there are three men below who would like to see you."

"Three men?"

"Yes sir. They are not gentlemen," said the servant, who understood the question. "They are men from the mill, I'm thinking."

"Very well; show them up."

It was a holiday and the works were not in operation, so that the operatives were off work.

Then was heard the tramp of heavy boots on the staircase, and presently entered three men, whose dress and appearance indicated clearly that they belonged to the class who are doomed to earn their daily bread by hard and unremitting labor.

"What is your business with me, my men?" asked Mr. Griffith, rising and surveying them with interest.

"Are you employed in the mill?"

"Yes, sir," said the foremost, Hugh Roberts; "Yes, Mr. Griffith, we are employed in the mill, and it's about that we've come to see you."

"Very well," said John Griffith, resuming his seat, "speak on, whatever you have to say to me."

"It's this, Mr. Griffith, sir, and I hope you won't be offended at what I say. We came here to humbly beg that you would be pleased to raise our wages."

"To raise your wages!" exclaimed Mr. Griffith in a displeased tone.

"Yes, sir. I hope you won't be offended."

"Don't I give as high wages as are paid in other mills?"

"Mayhap you do, sir; but it's very hard to get along on three shillings a day."

"But if I should pay higher wages than others they could undersell me in the market."

"I don't know, sir, but I think we would work more cheerful and do more in a day if we felt that we had a little more to live on, so that the wife and children needn't have to pinch and go hungry."

These words were uttered in a manly and straightforward tone, and there was not a little pathos in them, but it seemed lost upon Mr. Griffith.

"It's only sixpence more a day we ask, sir," said Hugh Roberts pleadingly.

Mr. Griffith made a mental calculation. He had three hundred men in his employ. He found that sixpence a day additional would make a sum total during the year of over two thousand pounds. This reflection hardened his heart against the applicants.

"No," he said, "your request is unreasonable; I cannot accede to it."

"But, sir," said Hugh Roberts, "think what it is to support a family on three shillings a day."

"It is hard, no doubt," said Mr. Griffith; but I cannot afford to make the advance you desire."

"Then you refuse, sir?"

"I do. If you can do any better, of course I won't prevent you bettering yourselves."

"We can't do better, sir," said Hugh Griffith, crushing his hat between his toil-hardened fingers. "We have no other way to live, except to work for you and take what you are pleased to pay."

"Think it over, my men," said Mr. Griffith more good-humoredly, for he had carried his point, "and you will see that I can't pay more than other manufacturers. I've no doubt your

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wives and children will earn something to help you along."

The three men departed with sad faces, looking as if life were a weary struggle with little to cheer it.

Scarcely had they left the room when Katy Griffith entered.

Born when her father was comparatively late in life, she was his darling and the light of his existence. It was for her that he wished to become very rich, that he might make her a match for the highest, as he was wont to express it.

"They will overlook old John Griffith's pedigree," he said to himself, "if his daughter has a good hundred thousand pounds to her dowry."

Katy entered, a bright-eyed attractive girl of fifteen, of whom her father might well be proud.

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