

the wide river mouths, after being driven by the wind, becomes caked or frozen so as to have considerable tenacity, and at the same time it can readily be cut with the knife. The Eskimo, then, with his butcher knife, cuts out square blocks of this frozen snow, as it lies on the surface of the river, of the size of ordinary blocks of stone masonry, and with these he builds a house, perfectly circular, of the shape of a bee-hive. With no tool but the knife, which is used as a trowel, he works with surprising rapidity, and the whole is arched over without any support from beneath, except, perhaps, a single pole during the construction. Any architect or mason at home, would, I suppose, be astonished to witness the work, and might fail in imitating it, for without line, or plummet and square, or measurement, the circular span and arch is exactly preserved, and the whole finished in the space of a single hour." Sir John Franklin, whose keenly observant eye nothing seems to have escaped, expresses his admiration for the beauty of the snow hut, as constructed by the Eskimo, in the following terms: "The purity of the material from which the house was framed, the elegance of its construction, and the transparency of its walls, which transmitted a very pleasant light, gave it an appearance far superior to a marble building, and one might survey it with feelings somewhat akin to those produced by the contemplation of a Greek temple reared by Phidias; both are triumphs of art, inimitable in their kinds."

NO!

BY ROSE TERRY COOKE.

CHAPTER VIII.

"TOUCH NOT."

YET this very experience of something beyond the solitary routine of his ordinary evenings had a bad effect on Jack, although he had escaped manfully this time.

He seemed to grow more and more lonely, and though he had resolved not to worry his mother he thought he had a right to ask her advice, so his next letter laid the case before her. Here it is:

"B—, Februrary 18, 18—.

"DEAR MAMMY: This letter is for you; don't read it out loud. I want to know what I shall do evenings. I get awfully tired of setting in my sky parlour all alone, sewing on buttons or writing letters. It's a good enough place to sleep in, and I don't expect any better room for six dollars a week. Besides, it would be just as lonesome if 'twas bigger, and as for looking out I'd just as lief see the stars as the back yard, and that's what you mostly do see—the yard, I mean here in the city. I kind of thought Mr. Gray would tell me about where to go, but he has had a lot to do since I came, and I s'pose

he has forgot me. It is real easy to forget boys if you ain't their mother. Well, I want to tell you and I don't want to so I'll just cut right in. You know Lew Denning that was in Mr. Gilbert's store? He came in the other day to see me, and he took me to the theatre. I don't know but what the play was good enough. The girl was real silly, but I s'pose girls mostly are exceptin' ours. But O mother, when they begun to dance it was awful! I was so ashamed I just grabbed my hat and run. I don't want to go *there* one more time. Not never! But it sort of unsettled me, that did. I want to go somewhere nights. What shall I do? You tell.

"Give my love to the girls and Mimy, and my respects to the ants. O mammy, I'd just like to hug you!"

"JACK."

Manice laid his boyish epistle down with a smile and a heartache. Suddenly there came into her mind the Master's words when he was about to leave his disciples alone as to his personal presence: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." And had her boy been kept from the evil? and taught far more forcibly than she could teach him the loathsome aspect of gilded and painted sin to pure and honest eyes! So she said to him in answer:

"DEAR JACK: Your letter is read and burned up. I am glad you wrote it. I think you had better ask Mr. Gray what will be a good way to amuse yourself in the evening, for he knows more about the city than I do. Perhaps there is a library where you can get reading. Dear, Jack do be careful about what books you read. I wish you could board at home, but you can't, and now you have to learn to be a man, to guide and control yourself with God's help to resist temptation, and endure hardness. As I have told you before, I am sure you will sometime be a Christian, and then you will have new strength and Almighty help. I wish you had it now.

"The girls send their love to you, and I dare say would ask you if boys or hens set and if ants deserve to have your message given to them. However, the girls did not read your letter, and I have a kind message from your aunts for you—and with *a!* Their message takes the shape of a pair of dog-skin gloves, which I inclose. Good-bye, my precious boy. Your very loving MOTHER."

Jack was much impressed by this letter, chiefly because his mother made no comment on his visit to the theatre. She seemed to be reluctant to touch on a topic so foreign to her nature. She did not even ask him not to go again. He felt that she trusted him and also in some subtle way he felt that she knew him even better than he knew himself, which was true.

Manice was a very wise woman, with that motherly wisdom which does not waste words even of advice and coun-

sel. She knew how tired young people get of superabundant words; she tried to be suggestive, knowing how a good seed always germinates and grows, but a large plant too often, if not always, dies of its transplanting. The mother's day is a day of small things, but eventually their increase filleth the earth.

She took this way, too, to gently remind Mr. Gray of his promises to her about her boy; to write and reproach him for leaving Jack so long to fight his way would have been much less successful.

Jack went to him as soon as bank hours were over the day after he got his mother's letter, and asked him quite simply if he could tell him where to spend his evenings when he was tired of his own society.

"Why!" said Mr. Gray, "It's too bad! I have been so perplexed and busy I forgot all about you, Jack. Let me see—come round to my house, 117 Randolph Street, this evening about seven, and I'll take you to some places where steady boys congregate."

So that evening Jack was made free of the Y. M. C. A. reading-rooms, and introduced at the public library, and indorsed there by Mr. Gray.

This was one thing, but the kindly cashier knew very well that boys need some relaxation besides reading, and advised him to buy tickets to a course of lectures illustrated by a stereopticon.

So Jack's evenings were fully occupied, or would have been had Lewis Denning let him alone. But there are boys who seem to delight in making their comrades as bad as themselves, and Lewis Denning was one of these. He was determined to make Jack his companion, not so much because he liked him, or altogether because he desired to bring him down to his own level, but he knew the amount of Jack's salary, and had easily discovered what were his personal expenses. Six dollars a week for board accounted for three hundred, excluding the two weeks of vacation; seventy-five cents a week for washing added \$37. 50; and a hundred dollars a year Jack allowed for clothing and small expenses. This left over a hundred and sixty dollars margin (cipher it exactly for yourselves, boys), which Lewis Denning thought would be quite a help to the various ways in which he enjoyed "life," if only he could persuade Jack into viewing money as he did, as merely the means of procuring pleasure.

He had not yet discovered that every pay day Jack remitted a surplus to his mother, swelling with joy and pride whenever he enclosed the checks in his letters, to think he was at last able to help the dear and beloved woman who worked so hard and so long for him. But in order to help Jack spend his money he must first incline Jack himself to spend it; and he made many cautious approaches in order to fascinate him gradually with the amusements and gratifications that were so sweet to his own nature.

Unfortunately for his plans, Jack did not care for music. He could

not be led into any doubtful society by this lure. But as spring approached and the sun shone more and more fiercely on the roof of Jack's attic chamber so that he found it hot and stuffy when he went back to it in the late afternoon, the country-bred boy began to long for the fresh, keen air, the tossing branches, the cool twilights, and the pure dawns of his real home in Danvers, and he lent a willing ear when Lewis proposed an excursion down the bay one moonlight night on a steamer that left the city at 5 p.m. and returned at 10.

Jack enjoyed the sail as only a boy can enjoy such a thing after a winter of work and confinement to the brick walls. The dashing spray of water, the sunset light on the long stretched beach, the gay crowds of promenaders, all interested and amused him. Lewis and he took supper at the great seaside hotel on L— Bluff, and the sail home in the cool moonlight was altogether delicious.

"Let's go again!" he said to Lewis as they parted at the door of his boarding-house, and Lewis assented with more delight than he expressed. He felt that he had driven in his entering wedge.

Now, the excursion was all right. A more harmless and purer pleasure could hardly have been devised for a healthy boy, and Jack felt exhilarated by its mere recollection. So he went again and again. The third time they strolled into a billiard-room, and Jack soon grew interested in the game; he began to try his own hand at it, and at last, at Lewis's instigation, made a small bet on a certain player. He happened to win his wager, and slipped the dollar into his pocket with an odd feeling of exultation. This indeed was an easy way to get money. Before he left the room he added another dollar to the first; and, but that the steamer sounded its sharp whistle, he might have gained—or lost—still more, but he dared not lose this last boat. The next time these two went over to the Bluff, sea or shore had no charms for Jack. He made straight for the billiard room, and this time experienced, luckily for him, that reverse which does not daunt the habitual gambler, but only excites him to further contest.

Jack lost ten dollars before his evening was over, and went back to the city with a sinking heart. It had been pay-day the day before, his board-bill and washing-bill and his new suit of clothes had all been paid for. If he sent the usual sum to his mother it would leave him but five dollars for the next three months. Fifteen had seemed little enough, but now?

There was nothing to be done but to lessen his usual remittance, and how should no! how could he bear to tell his mother the truth? The excitement of winning was gone. He looked back at himself with surprise and disgust, but he was upright of heart and brave of spirit. He sent the diminished check inside of a long letter that dismayed and yet comforted his mother. She could yet trust her boy's candor, even if his discretion had failed. She wrote back:

"You ask me, dear Jack, why betting is wrong. If you would use its other name, gambling, perhaps you would see for yourself. When a person works hard and honestly for money, do you think it is right or