

The Sabbath Bells.

The old man sits in his easy chair,
And his ear has caught the ringing
Of many a church bell far and near,
Their own sweet music singing.
And his head sinks low on his aged breast,
While his thoughts far back are reaching
To the Sabbath morns of his boyish days,
And a mother's sacred teaching.

A few years later, and lo! the bells
A merrier strain were pealing,
And heavenward bore the marriage vows
Which his manhood's joys were sealing.
But the old man's eyes are dimming now,
As memory holds before him
The sad, sad picture of later years,
When the tide of grief rolled o'er him.

When the bells were tolling for loved ones
gone;
For the wife, for the sons and daughters,
Who, one by one, from his home went out,
And down into death's dark waters.
But the aged heart has still one joy
Which his old life daily blesses,
And his eyes grow bright, and his pulses
warm,
'Neath a grandchild's sweet caresses.

But the old man wakes from his reverie,
And the dear old face is smiling,
While the child with her serious eyes reads
on,
The Sabbath hours beguiling.
Ah! bells, once more ye ring for him,
When the heavenly hand shall sever
The chord of life, and his freed soul flies
To dwell with his own forever.

—Selected.

NO!

BY ROSE TERRY COOKE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCING THE BOYDS.

"JACK, have a piece of this mince-pie!"

"No, sir; thank you."

"What! Thanksgiving Day, and you say no to mince-pie?"

"Yes, sir."

"Yes to the pie?"

"No, sir!"

"And your Aunt Hannah made it herself."

"Mamma don't like me to eat mince-pie, Uncle John."

"Manice!" called out Mr. John Boyd across the long, crowded table. A pale, tall woman turned her head and said,

"What?"

This sweet, steady face, sad in repose, but full of vivid expression when she spoke, belonged to Jack Boyd's mother. A little widow's cap was tied on over her dark, shining hair; her eyes were lovely, yet she was not a beautiful woman; but the broad, serene forehead, the firm, sweep lips, the general look of health and peace, and kindness, made her very pleasant to look at; and Manice Boyd's children thought nobody was like their mother.

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"Here's Jack says you won't let him eat mince-pie."

A very bright smile lit the dark eyes.

"I hope Jack won't let himself eat it, Brother John."

"Pshaw! not eat mince-pie Thanksgiving Day?"

"I thought pumpkin-pie was the necessity of to-day," laughed Mrs. Manice Boyd, "and that reminds me, Hannah, what sort of squash do you use for your pies? I never ate any as nice."

This interested Mr. Boyd. Before his wife could answer, he put in his word, for next to his business he loved and understood gardening.

"I'll tell you! Nothing but Hubbard; and if you want some seed I'll give you some, Manice. I save it fresh every year. Give me a Hubbard squash over all others, and Hannah's got some new way of cooking 'em that is the best."

"Yes, I bake 'em instead of stewing," said Mrs. Boyd, and then ensued a long discussion on vegetables which diverted attention from Jack, and by the time that was over the party had finished dinner, and walked into the parlour.

There were five children with the elders, and as children in these days are always considered first, let us inspect them.

Mrs. Manice Boyd's three children, Anne and Alice, twins, with the Boyd fair hair, grey eyes, and clear, bright complexions, are nice, wholesome girls of ten, in dark blue cashmere dresses, their thick hair curling in short rings, and their faces frank, modest, and agreeable. Jack, his uncle's name-sake, is more like his mother, with the same wide brows, deep, dark eyes, and a cleft in his round chin; yet about his mouth there is a trace of genial, yielding character that forebodes weakness; his mouth is like his father's, whom he scarcely remembers, for Jack is eight years old, and Walter, his father, went four years ago to California hoping to make a fortune, which he never did make, but only found a grave there one year since.

After the children had gathered about a table in one end of the long parlour to play some game, Mrs. Boyd left the room on a housewifely errand, and Mr. Boyd suddenly recollected the mince-pie. He walked up to his sister-in-law, who stood looking out of the window at the desolate November landscape, and said, in rather a peremptory tone:

"Manice, aren't you making a molly-coddle of your boy?"

"What is a molly-coddle, Brother John?" she said, smiling.

"O, a poor creature that fusses and isn't manly; fidgets about food and such things."

"I hope not," she answered. "I want Jack above all things to be manly, but to be a thorough man he

has got to have a sound body as well as a sound mind."

"Just as if mince-pie once a year would hurt him!" sneered Mr. Boyd.

"If it was only once a year. John, you know as well as I do what reason I have to bring Jack up in self-denial. Mince-pies often have brandy or eider in them, and you know what reason I have to avoid both."

Her eyes filled and her voice trembled as she spoke. It was cruelly hard for her, but she knew it must be done. Could not his own brother remember how handsome Walter Boyd had fallen in with a set of gay, godless young men, and totally unable to refuse their invitations or withstand their jeers, had gone steadily downward with them till his business was wrecked, his self-respect shattered, and at last he became bound in the awful chains of a habit that lets no such man go? Did he not know as well as she did that her husband had gone to California because no one in Danvers would or could help so unreliable a fellow into any business? He did not know the last and worst story of that facile, kindly, weak life; but she had just come to the knowledge, and when John Boyd interrupted her she was far away in thought, almost beholding the lonely miner's shanty where her husband had died a drunkard's death.

She went on more steadily:

"You know, John, Jack must work for his living; he must learn early to endure and to deny himself. You are kind enough to say you will educate him, but still there is the after-life when he must rely on himself. We have the house, and the five thousand of father's life insurance that was left to me, and yesterday I had a letter from Aunt Sally, offering to bring Aunt Maria and board with me. We have room to spare, and their board will help me along very much, for they will give me the same they pay in Dartford."

Mr. Boyd uttered an exclamation that we need not record.

"I couldn't help it," he said, as Mrs. Manice turned a surprised face toward him. Why, money can't pay you! If they are my father's aunts, I am able to see what they are: nagging, penurious, old things. If you must take boarders, why not take somebody that would at any rate be endurable?"

"They are relatives, after all, John, and need care and comfort that their money won't buy, and then I think it is better for the children and better for me to have them in the house than to take strangers in. I want to have a home so far as I can; and if it must be shared with others, I like best to share it with our own people."

"You know their money is only an annuity?"

Manice Boyd coloured, bit her lips, and said, with coolness,

"I did not expect their money, John; I knew it died with them."

"Well, well, wilful will to water!

But don't make a Miss Molly of my namesake, Manice. I wish I could do more for you than just pay for his schooling, but you know how it is."

"I think it is very, very kind of you to do that much, John!" she said, her earnest face lighting up as she looked at him. And remember, Brother John, if ever it should be inconvenient for you to keep him at school, you have promised to let me know."

"Yes, yes, child; but I don't see how it can be. I want him and Will to keep together; to be as near brothers as possible. But don't hold the reins too tight, Manice. Boys want their swing; 'go it while you're young,' you know, 'when you're old you can't.'"

"Perhaps you can't when you're old because you did when you were young!" laughed Mrs. Manice. "But I shall try and do right, John, and I shall have help that never fails the widow and the fatherless."

Mr. Boyd turned away. This was beyond him. He did not profess or pretend to any every-day religion. He belonged to a church, and attended its services; read a chapter in the Bible on Sunday and the two religious papers he took, but he thought religion was not a thing to bring in question every day. It was a good thing, a very good thing for Sunday, and for a dying bed; to live by it as he lived by his business principles was not to be thought of.

But to Mrs. Manice religion was daily bread; but for its strength she would long since have despaired of the life before her. A poor widow with three children needs some anchor to hold by, and she knew where hers lay.

A sort of squabble was going on at the children's table as her conversation with her brother-in-law ceased. Somebody was to blame, but she did not interfere or investigate as most mothers would have done. She only laid her hand on Jack's shoulder, as flushed and angry he was calling Will hard names and Will threatening reprisal.

"Jack, I can trust you to be a gentleman," was all she said.

Jack choked. He looked up at her and across at his cousin. For a minute even his mother doubted what he would do. But after a moment of silent struggle he said,

"'Scuse me, Will; 'twasn't fair to say you cheated!"

"You'd no business to, anyway," retorted Will.

Jack coloured again, and looked up at his mother's calm, approving eyes.

"That's so!" he replied, heartily. "Let's play something else now," and in a few minutes the childish faces were eager with delight over Will's new set of story-books which Aunt Manice had asked to see.

That night, after Jack had gone to bed, his mother went in to see him.

She always did that; it was the one confidential talk they all longed for. "Mending-time," Jack called it, for it