

stopped him, and laying his hand on his arm said, "Well, young un, you don't look much fatter than when I last saw you; are you coming to me for a little help soon? Look here now, a handy chap like you would make his fortune in a few years, and then you could turn into an honest man if you liked."

Jack shrunk back from him with horror. "Please don't talk that way Tim. I shan't be an honest man if I'm not an honest boy, and God helping me, I mean to be both, let me be as poor as I may."

"The time will come when you'll change your mind, youngster, or I'm much mistaken," said Tim scornfully. "Honesty doesn't pay in this 'ere world of ours."

"Oh, it does,—indeed it does, said little Jack earnestly.

"Where be you living now?" asked Tim roughly.

"At Mrs. Moore's," answered Jack.

"And how much are you earning?"

"Nothing at present, because I've

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been ill, and they've got another boy instead of me."

"And do you call that honesty—to live at your ease, and eat the bread of folks nearly as poor as yourself?" ask Tim with a sneer.

Jack coloured; he felt the truth of Tim's words too painfully to reply to them.

"Jack Turner, now listen to me," continued the rat-catcher; "your father and I were chums—not that I think he's done right by you, for my notion is that if a man has got children he's bound to provide for them; and it isn't for his sake that I'm going to say what I've got to say."

Jack looked up rather eagerly, for Tim's voice and manner were changed—they were almost kind.

"No, young un! it's for the sake of one who's gone. Your mother, Jack, was the only one who ever spoke a kind word to me of late years. She knew me from a boy, and though I know she didn't like me, she was always kind to me; so now, youngster, if you like to come and take up your quarters with me, I'll teach you my work, and give you food until you're able to earn it."

Jack hesitated,—there was a great of kindness in Tim's proposal, and after all to be a rat-catcher was not dishonest. It would be a very good thing to have something to do, and he would be able to earn enough to pay Mrs. Moore for keeping Maggie. But then, as he looked up into Tim's face, he felt as if it would be wrong; and there came into his mind a verse which his mother had taught him long ago, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." He knew that Tim was a bad man, and how could he expect God's blessing, or ask Him "to deliver him from evil," if he put himself into the way of temptation. And yet, after all, could he not keep away from all evil? No. He knew that if he was closely associated with Tim Long, he must be mixed up in a great deal that was wrong, for Jack knew that he swore, that he was given to drinking, and that he was not thoroughly honest.

The rat catcher watched his face narrowly, and said at last, "I see how it is, young un, you like your present idle life to well too give it up."

This roused all Jack's pride, and rather than that Tim should think this, he would consent to anything; so looking up at last, he said slowly, "Thank you, Tim, I'm sure you've made me a kind offer, and I think I'll—" He paused, and for a moment his thought went back to his mother's dying bed, and to the prayer which she had taught him, "Lead us not into temptation." He clasped his hands together, and repeated the words in a low whisper, and then said aloud, "I cannot come, Tim, indeed I can't."

(To be continued).

### A WISE MONKEY.

A little boy was playing in one of the rooms of his father's house with a monkey. The boy, in fun, tied the cord of a window-blind around his neck and pretended to hang himself, to the immense amusement of his playmate, which grinned and chattered on a chair.

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Suddenly the boy began to cry, for the cord had got into a real noose around his neck. In a very short space of time the monkey saw that there was something wrong, and tried to undo the noose with its paws, but had to give up the attempt. It then hopped away to another room, where the boy's grandmother was sitting, and began to pull at her gown, to chatter, grimace and look wistfully towards the door.

At first, thinking that the animal wanted to bite her, the old lady was frightened, but seeing that it was endeavouring with might and main to drag her towards the door, she rose from her seat and went, guided by the monkey, to the room where her grandson was moaning. The boy was instantly set free from the cord, though it was some time before he recovered from his pain and fright.

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