

## A Soft Answer.

AN English tramp steamer had just been tied to a wharf. From her dingy hold there leaped upon the dock a man who was evidently a stoker. He was black with grime, reckless of face, eager for release from an almost unbearable confinement, and ready for any animal gratification for which he could find opportunity.

As he emerged upon the main street, looking, probably, for the nearest saloon, he saw a colored woman walking sedately toward him, carrying a basket of apples. Full of mischief, the stoker stumbled against her, upset the basket upon the pavement, and then stood aside to laugh at the invectives which he supposed his trick would bring forth.

But the old colored woman did not even look at her tormentor. She bent and quietly picked up her apples. There was not even an expression of resentment upon her face. She bent here and stooped there, and when she had recovered her last apple she turned upon the astonished man with a pathetic dignity that forced respect,

and said, in tones of simple kindness:

"God forgive you, my son, as I do."

The rudeness that had counted on a bitter berating was softened in an instant. The man's coarse lips parted, his hard eyes fell, he tried to speak; then he thrust his hands into his pockets and pulled out all the silver he had. This he forced upon the silent woman.

"Take it," he said, and then added, as she looked at him in astonishment, "God bless you, mother! I'll never do it again!"

That which is probably one of the hardest sayings of Christ to accept, one that has received the ridicule of centuries, is illustrated by this incident. The principle involved in the command to turn

the other cheek to the smiter is utterly antagonistic to natural human impulse. "A soft answer turneth away wrath," is a form of presentation of the same principle, that, in theory, at least, is somewhat readily acknowledged; and its truth was never more emphatically verified than in the incident we have described. *Youth's Companion.*

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## Queer Friendships formed by Animals.

ANIMALS occasionally form acquaintances in the most unexpected places. Some time ago a cat actually increased its family cares by adopting a young rat and nursing it for several days, and

surely this is a most peculiar friendship for any member of the feline race to form. The cat in question had a family of four kittens to look after at the time she took a fancy to the rat, but the latter had as much care and attention paid to it as the kittens. She washed it with her tongue most carefully and allowed it to feed with her own little ones. At the end of several days however, the kittens resented the presence of the rodent, and drove it away, but still the



AMBITION DIVERTED, NOT DEAD.

"SNOWBALL GEORGE," a young gentleman who hopes some day to take a prominent part in South African politics, but whose "strong" point at present is a weakness for grapes.

mother cat had exhibited a most extraordinary friendship in caring for it so long.

Speaking of an animal thus acting the part of a foster-parent reminds one of another case where a cow has stood in that capacity to lambs. This was the outcome of an experiment, and may be regarded as a new way of rearing motherless lambs. A patient cow was selected for the office, and, as she raised no objection to a lamb approaching her and sucking as it would from its own mother, other lambs were allowed to do the same, until the cow had a family of six to look after. It is quite interesting to know that the animals thus fed thrive remarkably well.