

"Papa, I never thought of that—I only, I only—thought of the grapes."

"Yes—but all the same you were oaten. It is mean and ill. And to steal things—even very little things—a gentleman and a brave man will not do it. Remember this, Gerald."

"I will—indeed I will," protested Gerald with energy. It seemed at the moment quite easy to resist temptation.

But four nights after this, Colonel Ashley, coming home earlier than usual, saw a little figure slipping in through the dining-room door. His face grew dark, but he followed and stood in the shadow of a screen to watch what should take place. Very slowly the little feet went across the wide room toward the table. The candles were lit and the watcher could see the boy's face as he stood looking intently toward the bowl of fruit, on the top of which shone a large peach with a cheek like a red rose.

Three times the small hand extended itself toward the peach, and three it was drawn back. At last the hand went out for the fourth time and took the peach. Gerald looked at the beautiful fruit, smelled it, hesitated; then he began moving slowly toward the door. Col. Ashley watched him grimly and gravely, without a word. At the very door, Gerald stayed his steps, stood still for a moment thinking, then turned, hurried back to the table, put the big peach again in the bowl exactly where it had been before, and almost ran out of the room, as if afraid to look again toward the temptation which had so nearly overcome him.

Colonel Ashley smiled to himself behind the screen, a very pleased and happy smile.

"Thank God," he said to himself. "There is a real giant overcome. My boy is stronger than I thought."

Presently he went into the drawing-room, where he found Gerald sitting gravely by the fire, and quite ready to hear a story; and neither the father nor the son said a word to each other about the big peach and the temptation vanquished. Both were secretly happy, especially Gerald—for to have your own ap-

probation is even better than to win the approval of some one else. And when one has fought with self and won, there is a sense of inward growth and valor which is particularly pleasant even when you are only six years old.—*Little Men and Women*.

LITTLE PEPITA.

A STORY OF THE GOSPEL IN MEXICO.



ON the side of one of the many blue mountains that surround the old city of Saltillo, Mexico, little Pepita lived with her father and old grandmother, Senora Lugardo Colombo.

Pepita's father, Martinez Colombo, was what is known as a *burrero* or donkey-driver. He kept a drove of *burros* or donkeys, six or eight in number, and every morning he and his son, Tonio, would go into the city driving the donkeys laden with the supplies they had for sale. Sometimes it would be young Indian corn, or potatoes and beans, and the strings of hot pepper so much used in making the chile-concarne; or again it would be baskets of young goats, with their legs tied together, all crying out like so many hurt babies. But chiefly it was the great bundles of mesquite wood, without which no cook in Saltillo could get along.

Martinez had his fields at the foot of the mountain. The ground was tilled after the rudest methods, and the fences were such poor make-shifts, it was no wonder that the goats, and pigs, and cows were constantly breaking in.

One day, Martinez came in, his face the picture of the deepest despair as he said to his mother that the goats and the pigs had been again into his field of young corn and had well-nigh ruined it. He had fixed the fence time after time, but still they kept getting in. His mother said to him:

"Why do you not take the image of one of the Blessed Saints out there? That will protect the field if anything can."

The face of Martinez lit up with sudden joy.

"I'll take the whole set of them," he made reply, "and then I'd like to see any goat or pig dare touch another blade of corn!"