

consequence petted and cosseted by every one.

There was one exception. Colonel Ashley did not pet Gerald. He was on the contrary rather grave and peremptory with him, though always kind, and I think it showed what a fine little fellow Gerald was at bottom that he loved his father best of all. He would do almost anything to win a word of praise from him, for he admired him immensely. He was so brave and splendid, he had a sword which he had worn in battles. Gerald was sometimes allowed to hold it in his hand, and that was indeed a proud moment for him. He passionately desired to be approved by his father, so you may imagine how he felt when as he popped the last grape into his mouth and turned to go into the drawing room with the seeds squeezed tight in his hot little hand, a rather stern voice demanded, 'What have you there, Gerald? What are you eating?'

'Grapes, papa.'

Gerald's cheeks were very red, but he made no attempt to evade the truth.

'Where did you get them?'

'I took them off the table,' replied Gerald, his cheeks growing still redder.

'Did you have leave to do so from anyone?'

Gerald began to feel quite miserable. 'No, papa,' he said, in a low voice.

'Oh, you stole them!'

There was a scornful tone in the quiet voice which cut Gerald to the heart.

'Papa—indeed, indeed—I didn't. I never meant—they were your grapes, I thought.'

'Mine? Yes, but did you ask my leave to take them?'

Gerald did not reply. A lump had come in his throat. He felt very much like crying.

'Now, Gerald,' said Col. Ashley, sitting down and drawing the child closer to him, 'let us talk this matter over. We are friends, you and I, are we not?'

'Oh, papa—yes, yes.'

The little voice was choky.

'You know how we have talked very often about what bravery consists of, and how fine it is to be brave. Now, to be brave, one must begin with little things and learn how gradually. No boy ever

has giant's heads to cut off in these days. If he wants to grow up into a brave man he must educate himself by fighting with small things which are the same to him—tempters, temptations, little faults, and conquering them one by one. When you took those grapes you lost your little battle.'

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

'Yet—but all the same you were beaten. 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 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 ripe rose.

Three times the little 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 slowly to move 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 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.

Col. 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, 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 learn your own approbation 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.

Making Friends.

My animal family consists of a dog and a cat, says a writer in 'Our Animal Friends.' The dog is a long-time pet; the kitten is a new-comer. I hesitated to take her because Dick detested cats, but this kitten was a diplomatist, and she and Dick became fast friends. Just after her arrival Dick went to sleep on a large rug in the sitting-room, after curling himself round so that there was a little vacant circle between his body and his legs. The cat, who had been playing at my feet, grew tired and looked about for a sleeping place.

Suddenly she spied Dick, and her indecision vanished. With the greatest deliberation she curled herself up in the circle of his legs and went to sleep.

Presently Dick awoke. He raised his head lazily, and was about to drop it again when he caught sight of the cat. I shall never forget the comical look that came into his eyes. No human countenance ever expressed utter astonishment more plainly than Dick's. For several moments he gazed at the cat as if doubting the evidence of his senses, too much bewildered to bark. Then he slowly reached over and gently nipped the cat's ear.

Cutter gave her head a shake, to dislodge a fly, and slept on. Then Dick, who seemed to be experimenting, gave the ear a harder nip. This time Cutter started out of her sleep, raised her head, comprehended the cause of her trouble, promptly clawed the dog's nose with one little paw, and straightway resumed her sleep.

For the next five minutes Dick's face was a study, as he lay looking at her. Then, evidently giving up the puzzle, he lay down again and slept too.