

and asking me why I cannot be a perfect little lady like her. I think Edith is a great baby, and she is a little sneak. She puts on her ladylike manner when it suits her, or she can get anything by it; but she can be rude and disagreeable enough if she likes. I don't want to be like that. I want to be always the same.'

'Quite right. But it is not necessary to be unkind, to avoid being a sneak.'

'But I am not unkind.'

'Not about Mrs. Charles Mitchell?'

'It doesn't hurt her. I don't say it to her.'

He was silent for a moment, looking down thoughtfully. Then he said:

'Do you ever do anything very naughty, Vera?'

'Oh yes, some times. Do you know why my daily governess, Miss Jones, went away?'

'No.'

'Well, I'll tell you,' I replied. 'It was the naughtiest thing I ever did. Miss Jones was a nasty, mean little wretch. She was always prying and poking about, and trying to find out everyone's business. Well, you know my little dog Peter; she didn't like him, and wanted him kept out of the school-room. She said she was shortsighted, and was afraid of treading on him, but it wasn't that. She used to bring a basket, and steal cake and things from the tea table, and Peter went sniffing at it; that was what she didn't like. She wasn't a bit shortsighted. Shall I tell you how I found that out? It was such fun.'

'Yes, tell me.'

'She was always going on about Canon Duncombe in such a silly way—he was the dearest, sweetest, most angelic man. You might have thought he was a sugar doll; and she detested Mr. Stevens. One day, when we were out, I saw Mr. Stevens quite a long way off. I could only just tell that it was him. So I said "Look, Miss Jones, there is Canon Duncombe just going into the Close." She exclaimed directly, "What nonsense, Vera, that