

## Five Little Stitches.

Five little stitches! And they were taken more than twenty five years ago. And why should they be remembered more than thousands of other stitches taken by the same fingers? I will tell you.

Little Rose went to the "infant school" then. It was a very happy place for little folks. They had no hard lessons in arithmetic or geography. The nearest approach to lessons was saying over the "multiplication table" in a sort of rhyming concert—"Twice one are two, twice two are four"—while the teacher slid along the little wooden balls on the wire frame to suit the words. No; but when the marching was over, there were plenty of busy fingers learning to sew.

Rose was making blocks of patch-work—"nine-patch" her mother called it. Rose's mother cut the small squares and basted them neatly for Rose to sew "over and over," one block a day. And it was Rose's special delight to show her mother the neatly-finished block each night, and be able to say, "I did it all myself."

One warm June day Rose found her needle rather dull, and the new pink chintz hard to sew. Her fingers trembled when she came to where the four corners met, and she tried in vain, with her thimbleless fingers, to push the needle through so many thicknesses of cloth. She looked at the little girl who sat next to her on the same bench—an older girl than Rose by two years, and rich in the possession of a "real silver" thimble. Rose passed the block to Pogue (a curious name, but her very own: it rhymed with her surname, too), and motioned to a little hard corner, touching her thimble, and nodded and winked significantly. Pogue understood, and, taking the nine-patch, sewed very neatly over the hard place, Rose watching carefully lest she do too much. One, two, three, four, five stitches!—and oh, so neatly done!

Rose bowed and smiled her thanks, and put in a stitch or two as neatly as possible next to the "five," when she stopped in dismay at a thought that popped into her conscientious little head: "I can't tell mother I did it myself." It would take away half her pleasure not to be able to say this, and yet it was so very little—only just five stitches. "I needn't mind that," came the temptation; "I can say I did it myself; for that help is almost nothing." "But it is help," another voice said, "and you had better say, 'I did it nearly all.'" But Rose couldn't make up her mind to say this. Her mother would be sure to think, if Pogue sewed any of it, likely she made half the block—at least one seam across. So you see it was a real struggle. And how do you suppose she settled it?

After looking at it about as long as it has taken me to tell you this, Rose unthreaded her needle and very deliberately picked out those five stitches, and then went to work and sewed them over herself. And she is glad to-day that she did. Not because it might not have been foolish for her to have been so anxious about the credit of doing the work all herself—no—but because it was her first resistance to the temptation to tell a falsehood. And resistance once always makes it easier to resist again. So I do not think that Rose has ever told a deliberate falsehood since that day when she came so near making a black spot in her memory instead of a bright one.

## Taking Out the Tangles

Strong and eager and full of purposes as many of our young people are these stirring days, there comes, we find, to the best of them at times an almost overpowering sense of their own weakness. Then it is that the wise ones turn for strength to the One whose hand is ever extended to give help in just such hours of need.

Not long since we saw two little lads well-nigh in despair over a kite-string that they had succeeded in getting into a seemingly hopeless tangle.

"Let's give it up and take it to mother," cried one at last; "she can always get tangles out that are too much for us."

And as we saw the skilled fingers of the parent patiently extricating the close-drawn knots, we thought: How illustrative that is of the way the heavenly Parent undoes the perplexities of daily life for those who care to seek His aid!

Few of us can pass through a single day without encountering some difficulty that seems beyond overcoming. Then if we but feel fully the force of those words of the One mighty to help, "I am with you," how comforting is the sense of rest that sweeps over us!

## Gather Out the Stones.

"It is such a stony little path between here and Mrs. Harvey's, that I can't bear to go over it," said Jim.

"And Dick Harvey doesn't like it any better when he comes over here," said Frank. "I heard him say he had got over so many stone bruises in that path. He was grumbling about it yesterday."

"Why don't you clear the way between here and your neighbour's?" asked Mr. Morris. "You would much better do that than to take time to grumble about it."

"Why, we should never get all the stones out of that path," cried Jim.

"Not all in one day, nor by taking all the stones at once," said the father. "But if each of the boys who cross there would take a stone out of the way every time he goes, the work would be done. Try it."

The boys did try it. There were a half dozen young lads who used the path, and each one helped to clear it by doing a little every time he went that way. By this means the stones were cast out and the path was cleared.

This is exactly the way to make it easier and pleasanter for others in this world. Let each one make it his business, as he goes through life, to take some little hindrance out of the way whenever he can. Little faults should be cured, and little temptations that

cause unwary feet to stumble should be removed. Small unkindnesses should be confessed, and careless ways amended. Trifling slights should be smoothed over, and sharp words, dropped in fits of ill humour, should be taken back, as far as possible. All these things will make the path of life smoother. It is well worth while to clear the way. "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people."

## How Chinese Use Bamboo.

Just go and look at your long, slender bamboo fishing pole, and try to fancy what a house would look like built of that sort of thing. Yet, when a Chinaman wishes to build a house he doesn't hire an architect and look up a contractor, and turn gray over plumbers and decorators; he just merely goes and plants a few bamboo roots. Then he goes on quietly attending to his business and lets them grow. In a few months he has a fine forest of bamboo from forty to eighty feet high, and with stocks ranging from half an inch to eighteen inches in diameter. He digs a trench the shape and size he wishes his house, and proceeds to cut the trees he thinks the proper size, and sets them up in this trench, which he fills up. With the slenderer stalks he makes the rafters and shingles it with bamboo leaves. The windows are delicate lattice work of bamboo, and the furniture is of slender bamboo, bent and curled and plaited. His water-bucket is a good big stalk sawed off just below the joint and made as deep as he needs above it. For a bottle he takes a slender piece and treats it in the same way. If in the confusion of building he mislays his knife, he just takes a good sharp edge of bamboo, and it does just as well for everything, except cutting bamboo, as if it were Sheffield steel. While he is building he keeps off hunger by cutting the little tender shoots just as they peep from the ground, and cooking them like asparagus.

## At the Right Moment.

Don was walking along the pavement on a windy day. His bright eyes saw all that was to be seen around him, and as he crossed the street he noticed a lady in a buggy holding a baby in her arms and driving tolerably fast.

At that moment a gust of wind blew off the baby's little red turban. Away it went, whisking merrily down the road.

"I'll get it for you," shouted Don, without waiting to be asked, and he sped after the dancing cap which the wind had taken for a plaything. He soon caught it and handed it to the mother, who put it upon the baby's head with one hand, while with the other she held the horse.

"Thank you, little gentleman," she said. "I do not know what I would have done without you. There was not a big gentleman in sight, but you did just as well. Thank you again," and she drove off smiling.

This was one of the things that a small person could do exactly as well as a large one, but it was very important that some one should save baby from going home bare-headed. Clearly the mother could not get out of the high buggy to run after the cap. It was the duty of the one who was nearest to help her at once.

## Like a New Man

"For five or six years I had **Dyspepsia** in its worst form, sometimes completely prostrated; so much, that it was impossible for me to work more than half an hour at a time. I had tried various remedies but did not receive any benefit, when I was recommended by a druggist to try Hood's Sarsaparilla. I have taken two bottles and feel like a new man. I can eat and drink anything and enjoy my food. I never felt better. I cannot praise Hood's Sarsaparilla too much for not only has it cured me of dyspepsia but also of rheumatism." **JAMES FERGUSON, St. John, New Brunswick.**



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