

a young woman whose name was quoted in a street car as authority for a disagreeable statement concerning another young woman. She had never made the remark, and felt sure her name had been incorrectly used, but the matter was difficult to explain and a pleasant intimacy was practically broken up. Girls talk loudly and carelessly in public places often through thoughtlessness, and they are, in consequence, seriously misjudged as ill-bred. It is a point to be dwelt upon. Never to mention names, or discuss personalities or private affairs, is a good rule to make and keep.—'Harper's Bazar.'

A Single Stitch.

One stitch dropped as the weaver drove
His nimble shuttle to and fro,
In and out, beneath above,
Till the pattern seemed to bud and grow
As if the fairies had helping been;
One small stitch which could scarce be seen.
But the one stitch dropped pulled the next
stitch out,
And a weak place grew in the fabric stout;
And the perfect pattern was marred for aye
By the one small stitch that was dropped that
day.

One small life in God's great plan
How futile it seems as the ages roll,
Do what it may or strive how it can
To alter the sweep of the infinite whole!
A single stitch in an endless web,
A drop in the ocean's flow and ebb!
But the pattern is rent where the stitch is lost,
Or marred where the tangled threads have
crossed;
And each life that fails of its true intent
Mars the perfect plan that its Master meant.
—Susan Coolidge.

The School for Emperors.

(Howard Angus Kennedy, in the 'Sunday at Home'.)

(Continued.)

CHAPTER II.

If he had thought about it, he would have remembered that his room was on the third storey. But he did not think about it: the only thought that kept running through his mind was that he had to follow the little woman and do as he was told. Now the little old woman went flying through the air—or going through the air somehow, for he couldn't see any wings—and he just went through the air after her, though he was sure he had no wings either. He could see the tops of the trees in the palace grounds far below, but in a moment they were gone, and the streets of the city appeared instead, with gas lamps all glimmering through the smoky air. These were not the fine wide main streets and avenues that he had sometimes ridden through, all gay with the flags that fluttered in his honor; they were the little narrow streets that he had never heard of, much less been in. And how many of them there were! 'What a lot of houses there are in the city,' was the first thing he got breath to say.

'Yes, my dear,' said the old woman, without looking round, 'and what a lot of people there are living in them.'

'But they are only common people, aren't they?' said the Emperor. The old woman did not get angry—she knew how he had been brought up.

At that moment she sank to the ground, 'just like a balloon when they let the gas out,' said the Emperor to himself—for he had seen

that happen when he held a review of his troops.

They landed on a greasy pavement—for the day had been a foggy one—in front of a little shop. The shutters were up, for it was late at night, but the shop door was open and a frowzy man was sitting smoking his pipe under a dim oil lamp within.

'I have brought you an apprentice,' said the little old woman.

'You have, have you?' said the man; 'but where on earth has she gone?' he went on. Sure enough, the old woman had vanished. He looked up and down the street, and there was nobody in sight except a policeman just coming round the corner.

'Come in, and let's have a look at you,' said the man to the Emperor.

The Emperor came in and stood looking up rather defiantly in the man's face.

'And what might your name be?' asked the man not in the least abashed by the royal gaze.

'Emperor Maximus,' said his Majesty, with a very dignified air.

The man did not seem particularly struck by the information. 'That's a pretty mouthful to christen a child by,' said his wife, coming into the shop from a back room. 'It's altogether too grand a name for poor folks like you and us,' she said, 'so while you are here you'll answer to the name of Jack.'

'I shan't,' said the Emperor.

'What!' said the frowzy man, swinging a strap in the air, 'none of yer shant's and your won'ts, young man!' And as he saw that the strap had a large buckle at the end of it, the Emperor thought he had better hold his tongue.

'Here,' said the woman, pointing to a straw mattress under the counter, 'you've got to be up at six, so crawl in there and go to sleep. Can't think what mother Elizabeth meant by bringing you at such a time o' night—she that's always telling people to send the kids to bed early.'

The Emperor crept in under the counter and lay down, and though he was very miserable he went to sleep in a minute.

Sharp at six in the morning there came a kick on the front of the counter, and a man's voice shouting, 'Get up, and sweep the shop out, young un.'

The little Emperor rubbed his eyes. He had never got up before half-past eight in his life before; but he struggled to his feet and took the broom the man gave him and began to sweep. Of course he did not know how.

'Here,' shouted the man, 'don't smother every thing with dust. I should like to know where you was brought up, knowing no more than that.' The Emperor was nearly saying, 'In the palace, of course,' but he thought he had better not—he would not be believed—so he let the man show him how to sweep, and got through the job somehow or other. Then he had to take the shutters down, and the first shutter he took down he nearly let fall on the head of a chimney-sweep passing to his work. The chimney-sweep was as black as if he had not washed for a week, and the Emperor was mortally afraid lest he might have a sooty strap and a buckle somewhere about him. But the sweep was a good-natured fellow, and only said, 'Look out, young chap! That's a little heavy for you, ain't it?' and helped him to pick up the shutter, and showed him how to take off the next one without letting it fall. When he had got all the shutters down and packed away into the basement, the Emperor stopped to look in at the uncovered window. The things that he saw were not in the least like the beautiful things he had seen in the grand shop windows of the fashionable streets that he had ridden through now and then. One window was full

of boxes of sweets—the commonest kind of sweets, such as brandy balls, in great green bottles, and big sticks of red and white and green and yellow and purple stuff, and long strips of black liquorice, and great slabs of stick jaw.

'What are you dawdling about out here for?' said the shopman's wife, coming to the door. 'There's no time for dawdling here. Why don't you come in and get your breakfast?'

The poor little Emperor followed her into the back room, and sat down on a hard wooden chair at a rickety deal table without a cloth. The woman cut a great hunk off a loaf, and told him to help himself to the dripping. He had never seen dripping before, nor heard of it, but he spread some on the bread and began to eat. Then the woman poured some—well, she called it tea—into a heavy crockery mug. There were two other children at the table, a red-haired boy of twelve, and a flaxen-haired, white-faced girl of ten. Both of them seemed to relish their food; and the Emperor, although more than half inclined to say that he would not touch such stuff, was so very hungry that he thought better of it. When they had all finished, the red-haired boy put on his cap and went out to work, just giving the Emperor a punch in the back as he passed to make him feel at home. The Emperor was so taken by surprise that he just shrank away without saying a word, so the red-haired boy thought he was a coward, and gave him another punch by way of farewell. Then the woman and the little girl began to wash up the mugs and plates in a tin of water, and the Emperor was sent out to mind the shop.

As no customers came in for a little while, the Emperor passed the time tasting samples from the boxes of sweets. They did not look very inviting, not in the least like the dainty candies that used to make their appearance in gilded boxes at the palace, but at least they seemed to have sugar in them. When the frowzy man came walking into the shop the Emperor put his hand into his pocket, a little afraid that the man would not like his sweets to be eaten; but the man only chuckled to himself and said 'Eat all you can! Eat all you can!' It was very kind of him, the Emperor thought, and went on munching. Presently a little girl came in—her nose only just reached up to the top of the counter—and asked for a 'ha'porth o' stickjaw.' The Emperor did not know which the stickjaw was, and when the little girl in some surprise pointed it out to him, he tried to break a piece off with his fingers.

'Don't yer know how to cut it?' said the little girl. 'You use them nippers there.'
(To be continued.)

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