

# The Family Circle

## SIX TIMES NINE

I studied my tables over and over  
And backward and forward too,  
But I couldn't remember six times nine,  
And I didn't know what to do  
Till my sister told me to play with my doll  
And not to bother my head.  
'If you'll call her "Fifty-four" for awhile,  
You'll learn it by heart,' she said.

So I took my favorite Mary Ann  
(Though I thought it a dreadful shame  
To give such a perfectly lovely child  
Such a perfectly horrid name),  
And I called her my dear little 'Fifty-four'  
A hundred times, till I knew  
The answer of six times nine as well  
As the answer of two times two.

Next day Elizabeth Wigglesworth,  
Who always acts so proud,  
Said, 'Six times nine is fifty-two,'  
And I nearly laughed aloud,  
But I wish I hadn't, for when teacher said,  
'Now, Dorothy, tell if you can.'  
I thought of my doll, and sakes alive,  
I answered, 'Mary Ann!'

## HOW MINNIE WAS CURED

Minnie Grey was a very nice little girl, and she would have been perfectly charming, but for one great fault. She seemed to be entirely oblivious of the rule which teaches that children should be obedient to their parents and elders. Minnie was obedient to no one, and was always so ready with excuses to palliate her fault that her mother sometimes despaired of ever curing her. It would be impossible to tell you one quarter of the mischief and annoyance she caused by this failing, and although she was punished over and over again neither punishments nor persuasions seemed to have any effect.

'Minnie,' said her mother one day, 'run into the garden and mind Harry for a little while; he is playing with a big stick, and may hurt himself.'

'Yes, mamma,' answered Minnie, readily enough, but she did not attempt to move.

'Did you hear me, Minnie?' asked her mother a few minutes later.

'Oh, yes, mother, dear,' replied the disobedient one, 'but I really forgot. I will go in one minute. I just want to finish this doll's dress I am making; it will not take me long.'

'You can finish it in the garden,' said Mrs. Grey. 'Go at once and look after the baby.'

'But I have so many things on my lap, and I shall have to upset them all,' grumbled Minnie in injured tones.

'Gather them all up and take them with you,' answered her mother, beginning to lose patience. 'Here is a little cardboard box I will lend you to put them in.'

Minnie began very slowly and deliberately to arrange her scissors, cottons, pins, etc., in the little box, and after dawdling over it for fully ten minutes, her mother urging her all the time to 'hurry up,' she at last rose unwillingly, and was about to leave the room leisurely, when a scream from the garden caused Mrs. Grey to throw down her sewing in alarm and rush out quickly. She found baby Harry with blood streaming from his forehead; he had stumbled over the stick which he had been using as a horse, and had struck his head on one of the rough stones that bordered the path. Minnie was very much distressed when she saw what her disobedience had caused, for she loved her baby brother dearly, and when she saw that he had quite a deep cut very close to one of his eyes, and that the blood would not stop flowing, she became very frightened indeed, and begged her mother to allow her to go for the doctor.

When the doctor came he looked very serious, and said that if the cut had been the least bit nearer the eye poor Harry would never have had the use of it again, and would have probably lost it altogether. He wore a bandage round his head for a long time, and Minnie felt so ashamed of herself every time she looked at it, and was so penitent, that her mother did not scold her, for she felt that the suffering of her little brother was punishment enough. And so it proved, for, although she often felt tempted to find an excuse for not doing immediately what she was told, the sight of a little scar over Harry's left eye, which

never entirely disappeared, was a constant reminder which finally made her one of the most obedient girls that ever lived.

## THE CATHOLIC MOTHER

'It is out of the ranks of the poor that the great men of the world come,' said Archbishop O'Connell in a recent address to women. 'They are the men who bring the true nobility of the earth—nobility of mind and of the soul—up to the topmost ranks. It is the Catholic mother who has the true ideal of motherhood. While others are trying to barter their son into some business that will make his life in the world easy, no matter at what cost to the soul, the Catholic mother feels that her child is the child of God and is to be a prince of Christ's kingdom. So she strives to bring up her child as the Church directs. The task may be hard, but we must be patient and kind. The attitude of Christian mothers should be one of happiness. You know how hard life is if we look on the gloomy side. Those who do this always find life miserable. Our religion is one that should make us happy. Let nothing discourage you. Let nothing make you forget that God is with you.'

## LOST OPPORTUNITIES

How many, in all climes and in all ages, call sadly and regretfully to mind the thousand golden opportunities forever lost. The lesson is beautifully taught in the following Indian legend:

There was once a beautiful damsel upon whom one of the good genii wished to bestow a blessing. He led her to the edge of a large field of corn, where he said to her:

'Daughter in the field before us the ears of corn, in the hands of those who pluck them in faith, shall have talismanic virtues, and the virtue shall be in proportion to the size and beauty of the ear gathered. Thou shalt pass through the field once and pluck one ear. It must be taken as thou goest forward, and thou shalt not stop in thy path, nor shalt thou retrace a single step in quest of thine object. Select an ear full and fair and according to its size and beauty shall be its value to thee as a talisman.'

The maiden thanked the good genius, and then set forward upon her quest.

As she advanced she saw many ears of corn, large, ripe, and beautiful, such as calm judgment might have told her would possess virtues enough, but in her eagerness to grasp the very best she left these fair ears behind, hoping that she might find one still fairer. At length, as the day was closing, she reached a part of the field where the stalks were shorter and thinner, and the ears were very small and shrivelled.

She now regretted the grand ears she had left behind, and disdained to pick from the poor show around her, for here she found not an ear which bore perfect grain.

She went on, but, alas, only to find the stalks more and more feeble and blighted, until in the end, as the day was closing, and the night coming on, she found herself at the end of the field without having plucked an ear of any kind. No need that the genius should rebuke her for her folly. She saw it clearly when too late.

## ONE USE OF A THISTLE

It was late in the summer when Elsie went to visit her grandmother before school should begin. Grandma owned a big farm, where there was almost everything the heart could wish, and one should be happy.

Elsie ran, jumped, played and gathered flowers from early morn till night. One day in her rambles she brushed against a thistle, which left its mark on her little white arm.

'Grandma,' she said, 'I don't see what thistles were made for. They are not pretty one bit, and they only prick people, and spoil their tempers.'

'You must not let such a small thing ruffle your temper, my dear, for you will find as you go through life that there are worse pricks than those of the thistle which we have to bear. Come, sit on this little stool, and I will tell you about the thistle and its use. A great many years ago, in the summer-time, some Danish soldiers planned to capture Scotland. They knew that if they marched into the town, the Scottish soldiers would see them, and shoot; so they waited until evening, then took off their shoes and stockings, and walked quietly until they were almost as far as they intended to go, when one of the foremost ones stepped on a thistle. He was so surprised, and 't hurt so much, that he cried out in pain. This awoke the men who were supposed to be on guard, and they seized their guns and spears, and drove off the enemy. The