

# The Family Circle

## BE CAREFUL

Be careful what you sow, boys!  
For seed will surely grow, boys!  
The dew will fall,  
The rain will splash,  
The clouds will darken  
And the sunshine flash;  
And the boy who sows good seed to-day  
Shall reap the crop to-morrow.

Be careful what you sow, girls!  
For every seed will grow, girls!  
Though it may fall  
Where you cannot know,  
Yet in summer and shade,  
It will surely grow;  
And the girl who sows good seed to-day  
Shall reap the crop to-morrow.

Be careful what you sow, boys!  
For the weeds will surely grow, boys!  
If you plant bad seed  
By the wayside high  
You must reap the harvest  
By-and-bye;  
And the boy who sows wild oats to-day  
Must reap wild oats to-morrow.

Then let us sow good seed now!  
And not the briars and weeds now!  
For when the harvest  
For us shall come,  
We may have good sheaves  
To carry home;  
For the seed we sow in our lives to-day  
Shall grow and bear fruit forever.

## THE MAN'S BOOT

In a dark wood where wild beasts lived, there once lay a man's boot. How it came there I cannot say, for no man had been there; at least, the wild beasts had not seen one in all their lives. But there the boot was; and, when the beasts saw it, they all came round to find out what it was. Such a thing was quite new to them; but they were not much at a loss, for all that.

'Well, there is no doubt as to what it is, I say,' said the bear.

'Oh, of course not,' said the wolf and the goat and all the beasts and birds in one breath.

'Of course,' said the bear, 'it is the rind of some kind of fruit off a tree—the fruit of the cork, I should say. This is cork, it is plain to see,' and he showed the sole of the boot.

'Oh, just hear him, just hear him!' cried all the beasts and birds.

'It's not that at all,' said the wolf, with a glance of scorn at the bear. 'Of course, it is some kind of nest. Look! Here is the hole for the bird to go in at, and here is the deep part for the eggs and young ones to be safe. No doubt at all, of course, not!'

'Oh, oh!' cried the bear and the goat and all the birds and beasts, 'just hear what he says! It is not that at all.'

'I should think not,' said the goat. 'It is quite a plain case. Look at this long root!' and he showed the string at the side of the boot. 'It is the root of a plant, of course.'

'Not a bit of it!' cried the wolf and the bear—'not a bit of it! A root! How can you say so? It is not that, we can all see.'

'If I might speak,' said an old owl, who sat in a tree near. 'I think I can tell you what it is. I have been in a land where there are more of such things than you could count. It is a man's boot.'

'A what?' cried all the beasts and birds. 'What is a man; and what is a boot?'

'A man,' said the owl, 'is a thing with two legs, that can walk and eat and talk, like us; but he can do much more than we can.'

'Pooh, pooh!' cried they all.

'That can't be true,' said the beasts. 'How can a thing with two legs do more than we can, who have four? It is false, of course.'

'Of course it is, if they have no wings,' said the birds. 'Well,' went on the owl, 'they have no wings, and yet it is true. And they can make things like this; and they call them boots, and put them on their feet.'

'Oh, oh!' cried all the beasts and birds at once. 'How can you? For shame! Fie on you! That is not true, of course. It can not be.'

'A likely story!' said the bear.

'Can do more than we can!' said the wolf.

'Wear things on their feet!' cried they all. 'On the

face of it, your story is not true. We know that such things are not worn on the feet. How could they be?'

'Of course, they could not,' said the bear; 'it is false.'

'It must be false,' cried all the birds and beasts. 'You must leave the wood,' they said to the owl. 'What you say can not be true. You are not fit to live with us. You have said what you know is false. It must be, of course.'

And they chased the poor owl out of the wood, and would not let him come back.

'It is true for all that,' said the owl. And so it was.

## SECRET OF HAPPINESS

We each of us possess within ourselves the true source of happiness. Enjoyment is contained in our imagination, not in the book we read, in our appreciation of beauty, not in the picture; our musical culture, not in the instrument played. Our enjoyment of nature does not depend upon the charm of our surroundings, but upon ourselves. Some men will find more joy in the prairie than others in the Alps; some more joy in the desert than others in the flowers and forests of fertile lands. Is it the rich, the powerful, the popular that obtain the greatest happiness? We look about us and we know that this is not true, though we act as if it were. Blessed are the poor in spirit. This we know is true, though we act as if it were not. No one is truly happy who has not happiness as a well of water springing up within himself into everlasting life.

## WHEN THE RUSH COME

A gentleman was shown through the warerooms of a large wholesale establishment. In company with one of the partners of the firm, he went from floor to floor, and was surprised to find such immense quantities of stock on hand; a variety of goods from many countries was kept in readiness to supply the trade.

'You carry a very heavy stock,' said the visitor. 'I should think a smaller amount would do, and you could replenish it from time to time as you had need.'

'I can assure you that we do not carry a dollar's worth more than we require when the rush comes,' said the merchant. 'Our orders come in rapidly at certain seasons of the year, and unless we have stock on hand to supply the demand our customers go somewhere else and we lose their trade. We need a full storehouse to keep abreast of the times.'

Sometimes the boy at school or college thinks it is almost useless to study so many different branches of knowledge. Many a lad throws down his book and says:

'What's the use of learning such stuff as this? It will never be any use to me.'

But let such a one be assured that the time will come in after life when large and unexpected demands will be made on all the knowledge stored away during school and college days. At such times the one who laid in a scanty stock in school days, thinking that he could easily supply himself at the moment it would be required, will find it hard to compete with those who have a full storehouse of knowledge ready at hand.

## A CAT'S VICTORY

The mastery of herself which a cat shows when, having been caught in a position from where there is no escape, she calmly sits down to face out the threats of a dog, is a marvellous thing. Everybody has seen a kitten on the street doorstep attacked by a dog ten times her size, as apparently self-possessed as if she were in her mistress's lap. If she turns tail and runs down the street, she is lost: the dog will have a sure advantage of her. Even as it is, if he could get up courage enough to seize her on the spot he would be able to make short work of her.

'You dare not touch me and you know it,' is what her position tells the dog. But she is intensely on her guard, in spite of her air of perfect content. Her legs, concealed under her fur, are ready for a spring; her claws are unsheathed, her eyes never move for an instant from the dog; as he bounds wildly from side to side, barking with comical fury, those glittering eyes of hers follow him with the keenest scrutiny. If he plucks up his courage to grab her, she is ready: she will sell her life dearly. She is watching her chance, and she does not miss it. The dog tries Fabian tactics, and withdraws a few feet, settling down upon his forepaws, growling ferociously as he does so.

Just then the sound of a dog's bark in the next street attracts his eyes and ears for a moment, and, when he looks back, the kitten is gone! He looks down the street and starts wildly in that direction, and reaches a high board fence just as a cat's tail—a monstrous tail for such a little cat—is vanishing over the top of it. He is beaten: the cat showed not only more courage than he had, but a great deal more generalship.