

## The Family Circle.

### ROBIN HOOD.

About seven hundred years ago there was born in the pleasant town of Locksley, England, a little boy who was named Robert, Earl of Huntingdon. He soon grew to be very handsome, and had a sweet voice and charming manners. As it was the custom of the people at that time, he was taught to shoot with a bow and arrow almost as soon as he could walk, and at seventeen he was the strongest young man, the best player of games, and the surest marksman in all the country round. One day he went to visit his uncle who lived at Nottingham, and while there he heard a party of hunters telling about a great shooting match that was to take place the next week. The king himself was going to be there.

"I will go," said Robert, very joyously, "and show the king how well I can shoot."

"Do you think a boy like you can shoot before the king?" asked one of the men. That made Robert angry, and he said:—

"I bet you twenty crowns I can kill a deer at five hundred yards."

"And I bet twenty crowns you can't," said the hunter. The money was given to one of the men in the crowd to keep, while a party of hunters, with the men and Robert, went to a forest near by to see what Robert could do. The forests at that time were full of deer, so they did not have to wait long. Soon a fine one came prancing along more than five hundred yards away. Robert let fly an arrow, and the deer was instantly killed.

"Good!" he cried. "I have killed the deer and won the bet."

"No, you haven't," said the man who made the bet; "and if you don't begone you will be sorry." At the same time he struck the boy a blow on his head.

Robert only laughed, but when the man had gone away, nearly out of sight, he raised his bow and shot him dead. Then there was a great running about among the hunters, for this man was their leader, and they must find the boy who dared to shoot him; but it was no use looking. Robert hid himself in the depths of Sherwood Forest, and he could not be found.

After that time he formed a band of men and became their leader, under the name of Robin Hood. It was one of the laws of the king, that if anyone shot one of his deer he should lose his eyes, but Robin Hood and his men did not care for the king or his laws; they shot his deer, and robbed the rich travellers on their way through the forests; but though they were robbers, they never robbed a poor man, but would often give him the money they had taken from the rich. Robin Hood and his men were dressed in a suit of green cloth, and wore scarlet caps. Each one carried a dagger, a short sword, a long bow, and a quiver of arrows. Robin himself carried a horn, which he used when he wanted to call his men together, and although they lived such a wild, reckless life, the people all over the country liked them, and a great many funny poems and stories were written about them. Robin Hood's favorite follower was Little John, and this is the way he found him:

One morning he said to his men, "I am going out to find some kind of sport; if I want you I will blow three

blasts on my horn." He walked on, and soon came to a brook that was crossed by a narrow plank. Just as Robin was stepping on to the plank, a tall young man stepped on at the other end.

"You'll have to go back or be sorry," said the tall young man.

"No, sir! I can shoot you through the heart with my bow," said Robin. "But wait; I will get a stick just like yours, and we'll fight in the middle of the plank, and the first one that knocks the other into the water shall win."

"Agreed!" said the young man, and they beat each other fearfully.

At last Robin received a blow that knocked him into the water. They both laughed. Robin blew three blasts on his horn, and soon his men were there looking at him, as he stood, soaking wet from head to foot. From that time John Little, or Little John, as Robin called him, was his favorite man.

Many years after this a great fight took place between Robin and his men and the king's soldiers.—Robin was wounded, and when he knew he must die asked Little John to carry him into the woods. He then took his bow and shot as far as he was able—"Where the arrow falls there bury me," he said to Little John, and there his men buried him, and at the head of the grave they placed a stone, and on it the following inscription:

"Here, underneath this little stone  
Lies Robert, Earl of Huntingdon,  
Known by the name of Robin Hood,  
Who was a thief and archer good.  
Full thirty years and something more,  
He robbed the rich to feed the poor.  
Such outlaws as he and his men  
Will England never see again."

Robin Hood died on the eighteenth of November, 1247, aged eighty-seven.—*School Journal*.

### THE ENGINEER OF NO. NINE.

BY THE REV. E. A. RAND.

"Did you ask if I was ready to start, wife?" said Bob Styles, who was "boss" in the cab of locomotive "No. Nine," Still River Railroad. "Yes, my engine is all ready to go, fire started, water sizzling, steam all up and it only needs a word from me to start off."

Here engineer Styles of "No. Nine," made his arms go as if he were in his cab, letting loose from imaginary bonds "the crackest thing on the road," as he styled it.

"Good-bye, Nancy," he said to his wife, and turned to the door. He suddenly stopped. "Where is my little Sally, to stop to the shop at the station and get my beer before I go? Almost forgot it. Sally was in an adjoining room, sitting by the bedside of her brother Willie sick with lung fever.

"I—I—guess I would let my beer go, Bob," said his wife. The brow of the engineer darkened like a mountain crag overhung by a cloud.

"Nonsense," he said, it does no hurt."

"Bob, it *does* hurt," replied his wife gently but firmly. The tears, too, shone like crystal in her clear, blue eyes.

"Can't stand a woman's crying," thought Bob.—