

## A SUM IN ARITHMETIC

There came into our school one day,  
A white-haired man, with pleasant smile;  
He greeted us, and, sitting down,  
Said he would like to rest awhile.

'T was time to have arithmetic.  
The teacher said, "Now all give heed!  
Put up your books, and take your slates,  
And do the sum which I will read".

Our books went in, our slates came out,  
And the teacher read the sum.  
We tried and tried, and tried again,  
And couldn't make the answer come.

And then the old man said to us,  
With kindness twinkling in his eyes,  
"Who gets the answer first, shall have  
A silver shilling for a prize".

Then Tommy Dole resolved to cheat;  
And slyly taking out his book,  
When he supposed he was not seen,  
A hasty glance inside he took.

At once the answer Tommy finds,  
And, "Now I've got it, sir," he cries.  
The teacher thinks Tom worked the sum,  
And tells him he has won the prize.

But that old man had seen it all,  
Those twinkling eyes had watched the trick.  
"Well done, my boy! you seem  
To understand arithmetic.

"But now, before I give the prize,  
I'll let you try a harder one.  
Another shilling you shall have,  
If you can tell how that is done."

And then, with kindest voice and look,  
He gently said to Tommy Dole,  
"What shall it profit you, my lad,  
To gain the world, and lose your soul?"

Then Tommy Dole hung down his head,  
And tears began to fill his eyes;  
And all the scholars wondered why  
He would not take the silver prize.

*(Songs and Rhymes for the Little Ones / M. J. Merrison. - New York; London:  
Putnam's Sons, 1884. - P.130-131)*