

The Family Circle

THE SMALL BOY'S TROUBLE.

Before they had arithmetic,
Or telescopes or chalk,
Or blackboards, maps, and copy-books—
When they could only talk,

Before Columbus came to show
The world geography,
What did they teach the little boy
Who went to school like me?

There wasn't any grammar then;
They couldn't read nor spell,
For books were not invented yet—
I think 'twas just as well.

There were not any rows of dates,
Or laws, or wars, or kings,
Or generals, or victories,
Or any of those things.

There couldn't be much to learn;
There wasn't much to know,
'Twas nice to be a boy
Ten thousand years ago.

For history had not begun,
The world was very new,
And in the school I don't see what
The children had to do.

Now always there is more to learn—
How history does grow!
And every day they find new things
They think we ought to know.

And if it must go on like this
I'm glad to live to-day,
For boys ten thousand years from now
Will not have time to play!

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

O Catholic Church, when we kneel before thy altars raised in every clime, our eyes behold thy years—thy labors, and thy glory. We see the children of every age, of every tribe and nation bending low before thy Eucharistic God, raised on high in thy myriad temples. We see the princes, statesmen, sages, leaders of thought and action of the great and historic races—those noble sons of mankind whose names are bywords in the great world story—with their gentle heads bent low in adoration before "The Presence" of Calvary's eternal King. We see the fathers, the mothers, and the little children kneeling beside the great ones of the earth to share in the benediction of those who believe.

We see the holy martyrs whose blessed feet followed thy Christ up the road of the Cross, and by their blood have beaten a path for the children of the Church to tread to God's own country.

We see thy labors, O Catholic Church, for the poor—for the weak—for the unprotected—we see thee standing between the cruel oppressor and voicing the rights of the voiceless.

We see thy institutions of learning in every clime to bring to the youth of the world the lights of Sacred learning, and to lead them with gentle hands to the foot of the throne of God.

With thy golden ring of chalices encircling the world—thy Cross—the Cross of that Divine Founder raised under every sun—thou art indeed the wonder of wonders for the eyes of men to behold.

O Catholic Church, thou art the one haven of peace for the human soul—thou art the garden filled with flowers whose hues have been blushed from the altar lights of Heaven—who knowing thee would not cry aloud, Open O Gates of the City of God, and let me know that peace which the world cannot give.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

The day of the famous battle of Bull Run, during the American Civil War, General Smith with his division arrived too late to learn the password. Foreseeing that if he advanced he would be exposed to the fire of his own party, he asked if any man was willing to sacrifice his life. A youth left the ranks.

"You will be killed."

"Yes, general."

Therefore Smith wrote on a bit of paper:—

"Send me the password. General Smith."

He gave the note to the soldier, saying to himself at the same time:—"Should this messenger be killed, they will find this paper upon him."

Having reached the outposts, the young soldier was challenged:—

"Who goes there?"

"A friend."

"Give the sign."

He advanced in silence, all the guns being pointed at him. Quickly he makes the Sign of the Cross and lifts his hand to heaven.

The sign of the Catholic soldier recommending himself to God was, by a strange coincidence, the sign that the Catholic General Beauregard had given in the morning to his army.

THE SINLESS ONES.

It is related of a learned magistrate that, finding himself in the company of a country priest, he thought it to be his duty to show his mental superiority—usually the vanity of the inferior. Turning the conversation to the subject of the Confessional, he asserted boldly:—"Monsieur le Cure, I don't confess for the very reason that I never commit any sins." The good Cure smiled, lifted his head a trifle, looked squarely into the eyes of the pretended sinless one, and said:—"Monsieur, only two classes of persons do not sin; those who have not found their reason and those who have lost it."

TIME AND THE BOY.

Warm little hand in my hand!

Music of pattering feet,

Eyes that are clear as the day—

Time of his march I would cheat.

Warm little hand in my hand,

Can we not bid him to stand?

Warm little hand in my hand!

That were as foolish as fond.

Feet must be taught how to step,

Stepping to march tune respond.

Then, when aside I must stand,

Dim-eyed I'll open my hand.

Now when alone you can stand,

Walk with a firm boyish tread.

Join in life's march without fear!

God be your guide in my stead;

But you and I must not part,

Heart that once beat 'neath my heart!

A. M. PIKE, in the *Irish World*.

HOW IT HAPPENED.

"Was I wounded?" exclaimed the exasperated Tommy in surprise. "No, mum, not at all. You see, there's a careless chap in our company, and the night I got hurt he'd been eating oranges and throwing the peel all over the battlefield. So, of course, when I went to ask 'Aig if the night was dark enough to have some fireworks, blow me if I didn't slip on one of them bits o' peel and cut my finger on a salmon-tin."

BUSINESS AS USUAL.

A North Country miller, noted for his keenness in financial matters, was in a boat trying his best to get across the stream which drove his mill.

The stream was flooded, and he was taken past the point at which he wanted to land; while, farther

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