

The Family Circle

EARLY DAYS.

Looking back along life's pathway,
 Oft a drear and barren track,
 Lo, I reach at length a doorway
 Whence come dreamlike memories back.

And I see the quaint old cottage
 Nestled there against the hill;
 Round the porch the roses cluster,
 Breathing forth their sweetness still.

Yonder flows the murmuring river,
 Past the church, a ruin grey,
 To whose mouldering walls the ivy
 Clings and fondly hides decay.

Here, a child, at eve I've wandered,
 Yet with feelings tinged with fear,
 'Midst its peaceful, sombre beauty,
 For the dead were buried near.

Yet I waited, idly dreaming,
 As the river flowed along;
 I could see the trees above it
 Bending low to catch its song.

Till the twilight gloom would deepen,
 And the day's warm tints efface;
 And a bird's unbidden vespers
 Fill the ancient, holy place.

With the grey night stealing o'er me,
 And her garments trailing low,
 And her mystic peace around me,
 Home through fragrant fields I'd go.

When for me at last life's sunset,
 Fades forever in the West,
 In the gloaming I will hasten,
 Safely, gladly Home to rest.
 —ELEANORA, in the *Irish Weekly*.

RELIGION POINTS THE WAY.

The Church has been the bulwark of liberty during the long centuries since she was established. She has always taught her children respect for law and obedience to legitimately constituted authority. Every student of history knows the conditions that existed before Christianity was ushered in. All know how quickly the world was renovated once the influence of the Church was exerted upon mankind.

While the Church demands obedience to her legitimately constituted ecclesiastical superiors, and enjoins upon her children strict adherence to the dictates of religion, she inculcates reverence and obedience to civil authority justly ruling, and imposes this obligation as one binding in conscience.

To strengthen the arm of just government, to give society through the enactment of just laws the blessings of peace, she has urged upon the faithful a full measure of co-operation and respect. Glance over the ages that are gone, and you will note that wherever the Church has been heeded civic virtue and moral responsibility have been held in honor by mankind.

To-day the Church is no less insistent that her children should exemplify before the world the glories of religion. There is need for men to take thought whether it is better to barter away their inheritance which is dearer than life for a "mess of pottage," or stand courageously before the world as champions of Christian truth and ethics. Evils there will be, but the Catholic has but one stand to take, and that is on the side always sponsored by the Church.

Catholics from childhood have been taught righteousness. It becomes their bounden duty to promote the principles upon which the stability of society rests, principles for which the Church has stood for 20 centuries, principles for which our forefathers fought and upon which they reared the greatest Republic that the world has ever known.

In a word, the Church, as the foremost exponent of liberty through the ages, teaches her children that true freedom can come only by obedience to God's law and respect for all legitimately constituted authority. The Church teaches ceaselessly and unerringly what the duty of every Catholic is. We must heed those teachings. Therein only lies the guarantee of domestic peace, of national stability, and of international tranquillity.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

Sweet, gentle nature, learned, pious, kind,
 Your task is nobly done, the task assigned
 To you by Heaven. You did not point the way
 Alone, but led; and in your meekness lay
 The secret of your hold on those
 Placed in your care. Your eyelids close
 On a world the better for your stay.
 From many hearts will rise this day
 The sad, sweet prayer, Requiescat in Pace.

—P. G. Woods.

NATIONAL GREATNESS.

Father Hays, at Isleworth, London, recently, in the course of special sermons, stated that the greatest and gravest danger which to-day menaced not merely the life and well-being of nations, but the very existence of the fabric of our Christian civilisation, was the decay of home-life and the decline of virtue in the family. The greatness of a nation depended upon its home-life and the virtue of its citizens. No nation deserved to live that did not stand for the eternal principles of truth and justice and liberty. If we built our Empire on mere material prosperity, what had we? An Empire that would pass away. If we built up our homes and our family life without supernatural virtue and sent our children to face the perils of the age without a Christian education, what had we but a people drifting slowly but surely to paganism? Jesus Christ came on earth to redeem humanity and to regenerate society. By the example of His life, which was the highest, the holiest, and the most perfect, He had taught us that the shattered ruins of our civilisation could be rebuilt only on a moral and spiritual basis. What the world required to-day was a new proclamation of Christ's gospel to humanity and a new enforcement of the principles of the Saviour in the lives of men. The home was the corner-stone of the social fabric, and if we would regenerate society and reform the world we must begin with the individual in the home. What was wanted was the living spirit of the living Christ, inspiring the minds and dominating the lives of all who professed His Name.

FROM ALTAR BOY TO—!

His cheeks grew red from the candle heat
 As the carpet under his noiseless feet.

And no two stars could be half so bright
 As his deep brown eyes in the candle light.

An angel, he seems, with his surplice wings,
 Who knows when God is to come and rings.

And the clouds from the censer swinging there
 A fragrance leave in his golden hair.

It fills us all with a wondrous dread,
 His nearness unto the Holy Bread.

Now I wonder what path in life he'll plan,
 A doctor—a lawyer—a merchantman?

God keep him always there, we pray,
 Treading the altar's plush highway.

—LEONARD FEENEY, S.J.

REAL EXCITEMENT.

"Yes," said a meek-looking man, "I've no doubt you've had some great hunting experiences in your travels abroad before the war?"

"I have indeed," said his burly friend.

"Buffalo-hunting?"

"Yes."

"And bear-hunting?"

"Of course!"

"Well, you just come round and let my wife take you house-hunting and bargain-hunting with her, then you'll begin to know what real excitement is!"

ROSARY FROM SHRAPNEL.

The boy in the corner bed of the base hospital had been wounded in six places with shrapnel; and when the lead had all been taken out of him, and he was pronounced to be convalescing nicely, nothing would satisfy him but that the nurse should give him the enemy lead and a pair of pincers. Before the war he had been apprenticed to a jeweller, so he knew how to set about his self-appointed task. He carried it out neatly, and 59 little balls were formed of the lead—six of them somewhat larger than the rest—and then pierced and strung together. And so the rosary was made.

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