

The Family Circle

A RIDDLE.

I have a head, a little head,
That you could scarcely see;
But I have a mouth much bigger
Than my head could ever be.

That seems impossible, you say;
You think 'twould be a bother?
Why, no! My head is at one end,
My mouth's 'way at the other.

I have no feet, yet I can run,
And pretty fast, 'tis said;
The funny thing about me is,
I run when in my bed.

I've not a cent in all the world,
I seek not fortune's ranks;
And yet it's true that, though so poor,
I own two splendid banks.

I've lots of "sand," yet run away;
I'm weak, yet "furnish power";
No hands or arms, yet my embrace
Would kill in half an hour.

You think I am some fearful thing,
Ah! you begin to shiver.
Pray don't; for, after all, you know,
I'm only just a river.

A SERIOUS MATTER.

In this country to-day (says *Church Progress*, St. Louis, U.S.A.) there are 60,000,000 people who have no practical affiliation with any Christian creed. It's a startling fact, isn't it, for a country whose Christian character is boasted of so continuously?

But have you ever tried to find the reason? Have you ever traced the deplorable condition to its cause? Has it ever occurred to you that the system of education adopted by the State is largely responsible—quite likely more responsible than the individuals themselves? No doubt you have.

And how does the conclusion follow? Well, it is agreed that Christian childhood is the corner stone of Christian manhood and Christian womanhood. But for Christian childhood it is essential that religion be a vital element in child school-life. In other words, the education of a Christian child must be a Christian education. This means the combining of religious with secular instruction. The former, however, being excluded from the State system, takes from the latter all Christian character and does not make for Christian childhood, which in turn does not make for Christian manhood and womanhood. And here's the whole story of our 60,000,000 Christian indifferentists.

Fearing such a fate, fearing the danger therein to the loss of faith and the resultant scepticism and atheism, the Catholic Church, emphasising the right of the Catholic child to a Catholic education, has imposed on the conscience of Catholic parents the duty of giving their children such an education. The right of the child, the duty of parents, and the condition of the times demand a Catholic education for the Catholic child.

Nor is there a reason for defaulting where a Catholic school is accessible. We are speaking, of course, of primary schools. But what has been said applies also to Catholic higher education where there are means to supply it.

We have practically arrived at the opening of another school year, and submit these suggestions in that connection. Let us meet our duty in the matter. It is plain and imperative. Let us not, while lamenting the drift of the country into Christian indifference, if not something worse, contribute to the deplorable condition by depriving our children of a Catholic education and jeopardise their eternal salvation. It's a serious matter. Serious for ourselves, our children, and our country.

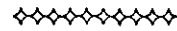
CHRISTENING UNCLE SAM.

In 1812 there lived at Troy, New York, a Government inspector named Samuel Wilson—a lovable character known to all his associates as "Uncle Sam."

When war broke out, Elbert Anderson, the Government contractor at New York, bought a large amount of beef, pork, and pickles for the army, and these, after being inspected by Wilson, were labelled "E.A.—U.S.," meaning "Elbert Anderson—for the United States."

The use of the abbreviation "U.S." for United States was a novelty, and the workmen about the place imagined that the letters referred to Uncle Sam Wilson, who had inspected and passed the shipments. Even after they discovered their mistake they kept up the name as a joke.

The anecdote made its appearance in print, with the result that it was not long before everyone thought of "Uncle Sam" when they saw the letters "U.S."



HOW TO BE HAPPY.

"Smile a little, smile a little, as you go along,
Not alone when life is pleasant, but when things go wrong.
Cares delight to see you frowning, love to hear you sigh;
Turn a smiling face upon her, quick the dame will fly."

The art of being happy is learnt by few people. It is not the possession of riches, neither is it the absence of troubles, which makes up our happiness in this life. One of the most important qualities to cultivate, if one wants to be happy, is cheerfulness.

We must all have our trials, and time will come when we will feel "out with ourselves," but others have their crosses to bear, and why should we add to their weight by causing them to share ours?

People with bright dispositions do a great deal to cheer and help all round them. Perhaps others are bearing their trials cheerfully because of our brightness, which lifts their crosses from them.

An even and amiable temper is one of God's special gifts, and happy indeed is the family whose members are endowed with it. Of all our faculties, speech is the one which is the most often productive of harm. How many homes have been ruined and lives spoilt by thoughtless remarks and slighting speeches spoken in the midst of an ordinary conversation.

These remarks frequently arise from the fact that we expect others to give in to our ways, and yet we will not consent to give in to theirs. Peace would be more widely spread in this earth did we but mutually agree to bear and forbear.

How often is the peace of a family circle destroyed by angry words, and certain it is that where there is no peace, neither can the special gift of happiness reside in the house where the above are used.

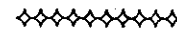
Much of the union and sympathy of home life are lost through neglect in cultivating and keeping up those little politenesses and courtesies of everyday life which add so much pleasure to our daily intercourse.

We have now taken a full view of the qualities which should be found in every home where happiness reigns supreme. One jarring note will destroy the most perfect harmony, so likewise one discordant element in a household will impair the happiness and peace of all.

"Smile a little, smile a little, all along the road,
Every life must have its burden, every heart its load.
Why sit down in gloom and darkness with your grief to sup;

As you drink the bitter tonic, smile across the cup."

—JULIA COUGHLAN, in the *Irish Catholic*.



NO OBJECTION.

He was a stranger in the town, and was obviously looking for an address. But he went about it in that half-ashamed way peculiar to shy people, as though the mere fact of being a stranger were a crime of the worst description.

He was getting hopeless about ever reaching his destination, when he espied a small and ragged urchin standing dejectedly on the kerb.

To this urchin he made his way, and, with the hectic flush of shame on his cheeks, addressed him almost apologetically.