

BAPTIST FEATURES

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June 9, 1955
CHILDREN'S PAGE

PEGGY AND HER NEW FRENCH SISTER by Cheryl Nicholls

Mother, I have big butterflies in my stomach," said Peggy.

She was watching the passengers get off the fast, through train. Now that the big moment had come she was frightened. What if she didn't like Francine? What if adopting this new sister was all a mistake?

Some months ago, Peggy's parents had decided to adopt a French refugee named Francine. Peggy had been as pleased as punch, at the time. A real honest-to-goodness sister was something she'd always wanted. But now--well, she wasn't quite sure.

At last a little girl stepped carefully off the train. She was small, and very thin and pale. Her hair was brown and neatly braided. Her eyes were wide with fright.

"Is that Francine?" asked Peggy.

Her mother walked over to the little girl.

"Francine?" she asked, with a friendly smile.

"Oui," answered the child looking much relieved.

"What did she say?" asked Peggy. Things were not going exactly as she had planned.

"She said yes in French," answered Mother and turned back to Francine.

"Peggy," she told her slowly, pointing to Peggy.

"Peggee," said Francine slowly, then suddenly she threw both her arms around a very startled Peggy and hugged her tight.

"But she can't speak English," said Peggy after she'd gotten her breath.

"We'll have to teach her," said Mother, quietly, and then they went to their car.

"I wanted a sister I could talk to," said Peggy, her disappointment showing in her voice. She seemed not to know that anything she said could make a difference to Francine.

A French sister was very different in many ways from what she had expected, Peggy found--and not much to her liking, either. She wasn't sure she wanted her anymore.

Francine tried very hard to learn English. She did very well, too, but was not fast enough to suit Peggy.

(more)

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"What izz that?" Francine would ask when Peggy took her with her.

Peggy always tried to be patient and tell her the names of things in English. Then she'd wait for Francine to repeat it after her. This took time--and sometimes Peggy was in a very great hurry. Francine thought it fun to learn new words, but Peggy began to find teaching her a nuisance.

Sometimes Peggy would try to avoid taking Francine with her when she went out with the other girls. Then Francine would look so sad that Peggy, who really was a very soft-hearted little girl, would give in and take her.

On picnics Francine tried very hard to be helpful, but she made many mistakes. She'd throw too much wood on the fire and smother it. When she was asked to bring the pepper she'd bring the mustard or something else. The other girls would laugh it off, but Peggy couldn't. She began to be ashamed of Francine, and of herself, too.

One Saturday afternoon Peggy and Francine were walking home from a hike in the woods. Peggy was thinking how tiresome it was having to teach Francine English all the time. Her thoughts were suddenly interrupted by a bright little French song Francine was singing.

Peggy found herself liking it and picking up a few words and singing with Francine. Francine looked at her, smiled. She sang more slowly so Peggy could sing the words after her.

"Good, Peggy," she praised, when Peggy sang the words just right.

This gave Peggy an idea.

"Will you teach me French?" she asked.

"Oui," answered Francine, excitedly. Then she corrected herself, "Yes."

Peggy looked at Francine with new interest. Now they would both be teachers and give each other something. She put an arm around Francine. As they entered the house both were singing the little French song.

Mother heard them singing happily together, and was pleased.

"Oh," she said, "Peggy and Francine are going to be real sisters, now. That makes me very happy."

It made Peggy and Francine happy, too, for they knew what good times they'd have together.

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SMILING PASS

Have you ever heard of smiling pass where Mr. Smileyface lives? He has a neighbor named Mr. Whineyface. Some day you will meet them going to town. Which one will you like better?

"Little Mr. Whineyface came to town one day,
Riding on a Growley grump,
Screaming all the way;
Howleyberries in his hat,
Schreecher leaves a-top of that,
Around his neck a string of squeals,
Whineywhiners on his heels.
What do you thing?
That dreadful day, everybody ran away."

"Little Mr. Smileyface came to town one day.
Riding on a grinnergriff,
Laughing all the way;
Chuckleberries in his hat;
Jollyberries a-top of that,
Around his neck a string of smiles,
All the very latest styles.
What do you think?
That happyday, not a body ran away."

NOTE TO EDITORS: Please carry this credit: "Smiling Pass" is from the book
Shining Armor by Edna Ewing Kelley

THE PHOEBE'S NEST
BY: James S. Tippet

"Let phoebes build on your front porch!"
My Uncle Bill said, "Phew!
That's a thing I certainly
Would never, never do."

But we didn't find them messy;
Their nest was neat and trim.
We watched the young ones grow and fill
The nest full to its brim.

And Uncle Bill admitted
that he was lonesome, too,
When all our phoebe family
Left the nest and flew.

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