

The Faith that Moves Mountains

AN EASTER STORY
Charles Eugene Banks

WHAT are your churches to do? she cried, passionate. "Sister Cecilia, from childhood I have heard these tales of love and penitence until I know them all by heart. I used to find comfort in them, but that was before I knew what real sorrow was."

She was a slight young girl, not above sixteen, with clear, delicate features, blue complexion, an abundance of hair that swept back from a full forehead like the waves of a clouded sea.

"My dear child," replied the sister, "you do not understand the teaching of the church. It is not of earthly things the Gospels speak, but of that spiritual love that passeth all understanding. Not of that love the Saviour died that all men might understand and be saved."

"I know, I know," cried the girl, "but it is not of heaven I am thinking, but of him, Pierre, the artist, who has gone and left me no word; of Pierre whom I love better than life, Pierre for whom I have given up all, even the church."

"It is months since I have entered the church doors. When Pierre came into my life everything else was swept out of it. I knew of no other world but the one he made for me. I never questioned his sincerity. I never doubted his love. It was a child and he made me a woman. And now he is gone and I am alone, alone."

"The man whom I love better than life, Pierre for whom I have given up all, even the church."

"I cannot help it. I try to think of him as being cruel and wicked, to hate him for what he has made me suffer."

Marie would have thrown herself into the arms of her lover, but Sister Cecilia interposed. "Tell me," she said, "before you lead this poor child into deeper trouble how can you be so bold and heartless. You acknowledge to having won her affections under a false name, you left her for two weeks to the scorn of her associates, weeping her sorrow, but for four months you come back expecting her to believe you honest."

"All in time, good sister. You see I had a playman's dread of being loved for my few callous squares of picture, and the cattle that kept the grass trimmed, rather than for myself. So I became a poor artist and went seeking a wife. I believed I had found her in Marie, but there was no love in her. I went away, but not so far that I could not keep track of what was going on here. She has proved herself an angel. It wrung my heart to see her sorrow, but for the life and happiness I have caused her she shall have a thousand glad ones. What do you say, little girl; am I to be forgiven?"

"I have never doubted you, as the good sister here will tell you. Besides, you know it is Easter morning. Don't you hear the bells over there ringing out the proclamation? I am the resurrection and the life, and whoever believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live again. I believe in you, and here you are."

She gave him her hands. For a moment they stood looking into each other's eyes. Then with the sister walking with bowed head before them they entered the door of the church.

But I cannot do it. Night and day I hear only his voice. Oh, something must have happened to him, or he would come back to me. "Such faith deserves to be rewarded," said the sister, moved by the girl's sincerity. "You may be right. Let us not despair. But should he never return, there is one who never forsakes, who is ever ready to comfort and bless. Tomorrow morning the Easter bells will ring to recall you to the faith of death and resurrection. So may we all triumph over sorrow and the grave if we will but trust in him."

The words and manner of the sister stirred the girl strangely. Looking into the tranquil eyes of the holy woman as she felt a wave of peace throughout her whole being. The flush died out of her cheeks, the sob died in her throat, and going to Sister Cecilia she put her arms about her, saying so quietly: "I know what you say in truth, even though I rebel against the teaching of the church. They who are of it, not you, sweet sister, but the others, the neighbors, even my mother, have been so harsh and cruel, have said such bitter things of me that I could not believe in the religion they professed. But I felt I must tell my sorrow to someone or I should die. And so come to you who are always gentle and kind."

the virtues, the very soul of this life. The sister's words were like a prayer and a benediction and Marie went away feeling greatly comforted. She hurried through the districts that led to her mother's shop and, climbing the narrow stairway that led to her own little room, fell on her knees before the Madonna, praying earnestly for forgiveness and guidance.

That night as she slept the room seemed to be slowly filled with a soft radiance and the Madonna, coming down from the wall, stood at her side with hands outstretched above her while she slept so quietly:

There is no death, the flowers say; in faith we hide our souls away. This earnestly desolate earth, And patient wait the promised birth.

The Southwind chime, there is no death, I come and winter lullabies sing. This earnestly desolate earth, And patient wait the promised birth.

Glad prophets of the life to be! A kindred spirit abides in thee, O sister, sister, sister, And yet is comrades to the rose.

The earth thy mother is, her breast Thy comfort, shield and final rest. They sheltered thee from all that's ill, And yet is comrades to the rose.

It was morning when Marie awoke and the air was filled with the chimes of many bells. The dream was still vivid in her mind and, involuntarily she glanced at the wall where the picture of the Madonna hung. It was in its place, but she could not escape the thought that the scene which was so vivid in her mind had really been enacted. The hour for morning service was approaching and she felt a sudden desire to sit once more with the congregation in the holy silence, to join in the responses, and to hear the music of the familiar songs. For whom I love better than life, Pierre for whom I have given up all, even the church.

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W. N. FERRIS LAUDS WORKING RESERVE

SAYS BOYS CAN HELP SOLVE PROBLEM THAT CONFRONTS FARMER TODAY.

SHOULD BE GIVEN A CHANCE

Says Farmer Should Do His Bit By Encouraging Boys—Will Be of Benefit to Entire Nation.

Former Governor Woodbridge N. Ferris is an enthusiastic backer of the Boys' Working Reserve. In a straight forward terms he sets forth the benefits that will be derived by the nation if city boys are given a chance to do their bit on the farm. He cautions the boys that their enrollment in the Reserve means that they must be prepared to sacrifice amusement for hard, trying work.

His letter to Charles A. Farrells, State Director of the U. S. Boys' Working Reserve, follows: "The United States Boys' Working Reserve can be made an exceedingly valuable organization. The boys should clearly understand that they are enlisting to do a service. They are to have the same regard for commands that soldiers have. They must entertain the notion that they are not going out on the farms for a play spell, but to render actual service and to endure some hardships. The truth of the matter is, work on a farm like

to success in any undertaking. These parents should stand back of the boys and insist that they meet sacrifices and hardships with the same delight that an Arctic explorer does his work. The boys should not only spend their days on the farm, but their nights as well. They should become thoroughly initiated in all the kinds of life that belong to the farm.

A Great Opportunity. "It is true that farmers have a duty to perform, but the mysteries of the farm are comparatively few. Boys will do a very few days be able to render invaluable service to the farmer. Farmers are like other employers compelled to exercise patience, especially in strenuous times. "What is needed in order to make the Boys' Reserve campaign a success is co-operation on the part of farmers, parents and boys.

"I consider this the greatest opportunity that has ever been offered to the boys of this country. Eliminate the factor of war, and the educational benefits that are to come from this campaign are worth to the future welfare of this country the price of the bonded debt. This is no exaggeration. "One year ago a very large number of our American people did not quite realize what this world war means. Today the American people are awake. Even the boys and girls are awake. Give them a chance to do their bit. (Signed) WOODBRIDGE N. FERRIS.

Cook & Co. have just received a new and up-to-date stock of wall paper. Don't forget our liner column.



The year's at the spring And the day's at the morn!

SHE CHANGED HER MIND

But She Had a Good Reason For Doing So

By RUTH GRAHAM

The full September moon shone down upon a little cabin on the dry prairies of western Kansas, lighting up the faces of a young man and woman who were slowly walking up and down the open space before the door. "I was so happy, Rachel," the man said, gazing at the strong, beautiful face of his companion, "when I heard your school up in the Wyoming mountains was closed and you were coming home. I thought you were coming to stay this time. I hope so, for, Rachel, I've loved you a long time."

from the man's eager face and looked across the moonlight. "I've been working and waiting, Rachel," he continued, his voice husky with feeling, "until I had something to offer you. I was sure you wouldn't give up teaching for just anything—no matter how kind."

"But I've loved you ever since two years ago, when we all came out to these prairies together in our covered wagons. I remember, after we were on our parents' feet started off comfortably before you went with your uncle to Wyoming to teach that ranch school."

"But, Rachel," he pleaded, "you shall never work as your mother has had to. I promise it. Then, suddenly, with a catch in his voice, he said, "Get a better in the report about your earnings for that rich Wyoming ranchman?" "Mr. Miles has been very kind to me," she answered without pretending to be interested. "He offered to let me and mother have the lovely home he owns in Denver if I'll marry him. It would be an ideal place for them to end their days in."

"My God, Rachel! I couldn't stand it to see you the wife of another!" the young man cried, his strong frame shaken with emotion. "You mustn't care so much, Dan," she returned, tender pity for his suffering making her voice kind. "Get a better girl to share your home—one who will love you enough to make the best of this hard life."

"Never, never, Rachel!" he answered, with passion. "I love only you. If you could but read my heart and see how much, you would surely care just a little for me. Your ranchman, rich as he is, will never love you as I do, Rachel! Never!"

"I couldn't love any man well enough to give up all I enjoy and settle down to this isolated life, this continual treadmill of drudgery," she retorted, turning away; then in a lighter tone, "Forget me, Dan!"

"Forget her! That he would never do—he never could. There was a time—it was when they lived in their covered wagons and camped at night by the trail fires, and even after they were settled here—that he had thought, she cared for him."

Those had been the happiest days in Rachel's life. If she had never dreamed of the preservation of these, the old couple entered the house and threw themselves upon the floor. "Then Southard and Rachel came back with weary, lagging feet from their last successful outing. "Everything's safe now, Rachel," he said huskily, starting toward his horse. "Dan," she questioned, a queer choking in her throat, "you are not going now?"

He stopped and looked at her. She had never appeared more beautiful to him than now, with the marks of that cruel, bleeding hands and scorched face, bleeding hands and burned clothing. "All we have left we owe to you, Dan," she went on, noting his aching face, bleeding hands and scorched face. "Then she placed her blackened hand on his shoulder. How he trembled under that touch! "I don't feel as if I could bear to have you leave us, Dan. There was a tender pleading in her tones. "The danger's over, Rachel," he reassured her, "and I must ride all the way to Westfield before daylight. "Only a mass of smoking ruins marked the place where his horse and stable had been. She understood. "You left all you had to come to us, Dan," she said, with a sob. "Now you have nothing left. Without your help everything here, even our lives, would have been sacrificed. Oh, Dan, the light of that fire has given me a sight of my own heart! I see that the true life for me is right here, and if you'll let me I'll help you make another home."

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