

Chapter 6 (Part 1), May 1923



Miss Chester and Angie had become fast friends; very often the doctor's big car drew up at Daly's humble gate, and Angie was whisked away to the Chester mansion, to cheer the poor invalid. The bitter lines softened in Barbara Chester's beautiful face; her fits of violent temper became less frequent, and finally ceased. The doctor seemed twenty years younger; his stooping shoulders straightened, his step grew light, and, although his face still wore a sad expression, it did not look unhappy, despairing, as it formerly had.

Miss Chester could not know Angie without knowing the "Far East," too, and since she was too old to be a Little Missionary, she said she would be a Big Sister Missionary to the little ones. She took a keen interest in the little paper, especially in the children's pages. She called back to her couch the sympathetic friends she had insulted and driven away.

They, too, were told of the work the little paper was doing to win China for Christ, and they were pressed into the service. Several of them were not Catholics, but they agreed that the cause was good, and they were happy to help it, and to please their poor friend. Soon a busy little circle gathered round Barbara's couch on certain afternoons to sew and knit for the children of the Mission orphanages and for the Mission Fathers themselves. Angie and Mary were of the circle, and little Angie would sit in a big chair, her pale face shining with happiness, her knitting needles flying as fast as if she were a little "Home" girl who had been knitting since she could toddle. Those thin, delicate fingers of Angie's were very clever.

Dr. Chester looked in on the busy group as often as he could, and tried to be home in time for afternoon tea. His loving eyes would stray from his daughter's face to the angelic child's, to whom, under God, he owed his new - found happiness. The faith in God that he thought belonged only to his childhood was coming back to him. He had been taught to believe in a stern, hard God, but little Angie was leading him to a God of love and mercy.

Barbara could laugh and joke now, and was constantly twitting her father about his "easy" life, and advising him to join the Han Yang Medical Mission. But Dr. Chester shook his head, laughingly: "You'll have no one left here, if you and Angie have your way."

During May Angie and Mary held a little bazaar. Angie made dolls, such cute little things, out of clothes pegs. Mary made all kinds of pretty little bags, sprays or flowers, and all kinds of fancy things. Teddy ruined his fingers "carving" boxes and photo frames - Teddy said they were carved, but Dad said they were "dug." The Twins made dozens and dozens of little cardboard boxes and baskets for sweets, and Baby Bet tied pretty coloured papers round them. Mother and Kate promised good, wholesome, home-made sweets, and Father was "down" for a large consignment of peanuts. Teddy said peanuts would give the bazaar a Chinese look.



When Miss Chester heard of the bazaar, she sent piles of pretty things for it - a doll dressed as "Maureen," another as "The Twin," a kewpie as "Orlando," and a pretty toy dog as "Rory." What fun these gifts made for the children!

Teddy and the Twins fixed up stalls in the garden. You should have heard the hammering and sawing and shouting of directions that went on. But, when the stalls were finished and the goods arranged, it was the dearest, daintiest, prettiest little bazaar you ever saw - and so said the children for miles round when they saw it.

All the Dalys were "dressed up" for the occasion. Teddy was a Chinese, and jabbered a lot of nonsense that he convinced the poor, innocent Twins was "dinkum Chow talk." Teddy sold peanuts, and was very busy and happy. Mick, dressed in his Indian clothes, whooped and danced in a little tent, and one had to pay a penny to see him do it. Mack shyly rang a little bell at the tent door, and invited everyone in to see the Great War Chief, Whack-em-Heart-i, Mack took the pennies as if they were red - hot - Mack has no business instincts.

The green table cloth from the dining - room had been thrown over the hibiscus clump, and it made a mysterious little room, where Mary, draped in black veils, told fortunes. Nine-tenths of her clients were promised a trip to China shortly; others were filled with false hopes of meeting someone they loved very much, but had never seen - someone whose name commenced with an "M"; others, again, were gleefully assured they would win the next "Far East" competition that would be held. "Madame Fortuntini" giggled a great deal over the fortunes, and so did her clients. But, young as they were, they understood that no one - no hand-reader, or fortune-teller, or crystal-gazer-could tell their future any truer than Mary Daly could. With Mary it was a lovely joke; with paid fortune-tellers, it is a wicked hoax. God, only, knows the future. It is a wonderful, mysterious thing waiting for us, that God has planned for us. If we will only the good and patient, we need not fear it, No matter what it brings, God sends it, and so we will trust in Him.

But it was a great joke playing fortunes at Daly's bazaar!

Angie served sweets in dainty little bags and baskets. Miss Elizabeth tried to help, but got in everyone's way, and was heartily kissed for it. Shamie barked and snapped playfully at all the

strange legs he found, to his surprise, in the Dalys' garden, that happy afternoon. Mother and Kate supported everyone.

The Great War Chief, Whack-em-Heart-i, was in the midst of a war dance, when the tent - made from Mother's second - best sheets - collapsed. What muffled laughs and shrieks came from the folds of the sheets! Mack looked very much distressed, and offered to give the pennies back. Mack was too conscientious for business.

"No fear!" cried Mick, "No money back! They got extra - all the fun when the tent fell!"

Dr. Chester found time, despite his busy hours, to visit the bazaar, to buy something for his own "little girl."

He had his fortune told, and was promised a trip to China in the "near future," and tons and tons of money.

But there was another grown - up visitor. All the children - except Teddy - seemed suddenly turned to stone, when they saw him at the gate.

Why ever did he come? If he touched them with his skinny hand, wh-what would happen them? The younger ones (played upon by elders who liked "thrills") whimpered and sobbed. Cold shivers ran down their little backs. Wide, wondering eyes; parted, questioning lips - what a little sea of frightened faces met the gaze of the visitor!

"Oh gee!" muttered Teddy, "I didn't think he'd come. What'll I do with him? Won't Dad be mad with me - and Mother, too? Jings! I wish I hadn't told him."

The old gentleman raised his hat as Mother came across the grass with a tray of cakes. "Allow me," he said gallantly, and took the tray from her hands and carried it to the little table under the wattles. Mother's eyes and lips were only one degree less wondering than the children's round her.

Teddy came up, stammering, and looking very foolish in his Chinese "get - up".

"Mother, this is - er - I -" he "swallowed" hard. "It's Mr.- " - Teddy gathered his courage - "it's Mr. Carney, Mother. I - I - told him about bile bazaar. I wrote to him."

To be continued