

"O father!" said Pepita, who overheard the conversation, "those are only images of wax and wood; they can do no good. I heard my dear teacher at the mission school say so. It is God, the one God in heaven," looking upward reverently as she spoke, "who is to help us when we are in trouble."

Her father looked at her with a dark scowl.

"Don't let me hear any more such stuff as that!" he said, sternly. "Haven't we been praying to the images all our lives? It isn't likely we'd change to anything else so late in the day."

"But, father," persisted Pepita, bravely, "here is a little book that tells us how sinful it is to worship these images of stone, and wood, and wax," and as she spoke Pepita drew a small brown book from under the folds of her shawl, and read:

*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.*

"O father!" she continued, "this little book is the Bible, the very word of God Himself. It cannot speak falsely."

"If these are the kind of things you are learning at that mission school, Pepita," he said, his brow darker than ever, "then I think it is time I put a stop to it. As to that book you have there, well, I'll inquire into that as soon as I have settled with the pigs and goats."

So, that very afternoon he took the images of the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, and Saint Antonio out to the field and set them up in the most conspicuous place. He chuckled to himself many times on his way back to the house when he thought how those Blessed Saints would put to rout every pig and goat.

Early the next morning he hurried to the field, when lo, such a sight as met his gaze! More corn than ever had been eaten. The ground was torn up in every direction, while scattered about were Saint Joseph, Saint Antonio, and the Blessed Virgin! The dress of the latter was torn to shreds, Saint Antonio had lost the collar and one sleeve of his coat,

while as to poor Saint Joseph his entire nose was gone!

The old grandmother came with tears of indignation in her eyes, and gently picked up the dilapidated Virgin and tenderly bore her homeward to repair her clothing. The other two images Martinez hung upon a tree overlooking the field, so as to *compel* them to protect his corn. The next morning they were still hanging there, while the destruction of the corn during the night had been greater than ever. Somehow Martinez could not help thinking to himself of Pepita and of that little brown book from which she had read those strange words with reference to images and of that other God who had declared His anger against those who made them. Did that other God have anything to do with the way these images were behaving?

In high displeasure Martinez now took the images and buried them in the ground in order to "force them to terms," as he said. But still the destruction of his corn went on. Finally, in great anger, he dug them up and broke them to pieces.

"For," said he, "if all of them together cannot save a field of corn, how are they to save the soul of a man as the priests teach us? Pepita must be right after all, and there is a God greater than any of these."

When Pepita saw her father break up the images and heard what he said, tears of great joy came into her eyes. She went to him and put her arms around his neck and said:

"Dear father, I am so glad you have found those images can do you no good. Come, let us go and build the fence about the field as well as we can; then trust to God, the one true God, for the rest. To-night I will read you about Him in that dear, precious book of mine, yes, and grandmother, for she too must know of this God and love Him."

It was not many months afterward that the good missionary at the little chapel in Saltillo added the names of two more earnest converts to his church roll. The names were those of Martinez and Lugarda Colombo. Patiently and bravely had Pepita led them out of the darkness of night into the glad light of the Gospel morning.—*Messenger*.