

had a chance; and so he often called to the old widow when she was in sight, and gave her a ride to or from the market town. This saved her many a weary mile. She felt very grateful to the guard for his kindness, and the object of this story is to show how profitable his kindness proved to him.

One spring, in the stormy month of March, heavy rains had fallen. Roaring torrents of melting snow and ice came rushing down from the mountains into the gorge near the old widow's hut. The flood arose in the darkness of the night, and she heard a terrible crash. The railway bridge was torn from its place, and its broken timbers dashed against the rocks below. It was almost midnight. The rain fell in torrents. It was dark as Egypt. The storm was howling terribly. In half an hour the express train would be due. What could be done to give warning of the awful danger threatening that train? It was terrible to think of the destruction that awaited it. But what *could she* do? She had hardly a whole candle in her hut, and no light she could make, of this kind, could burn in that wild storm. Not a moment was to be lost. Quick as thought she resolved what to do. She cut the cord of her only bedstead, and shouldered the bedding, the bed-posts, the side pieces and head pieces. Her daughter followed with their two wooden chairs. They climbed up the steep embankment, and piled all their household furniture in the middle of the railway line, a few rods in front of the awful gorge through which the wild flood was dashing. She kindled the fire; and the distant rumbling of the train was heard just as the dry, broken furniture began to burn. The bright blaze leaped up and threw its red, glaring light a long way upon the line. But the fire would not last long, and she had nothing more with which to keep it burning.

The thunder of the train grew louder. But it was still five miles distant. Will they see it in time? Will they put on the brakes soon enough? The thought almost makes her wild. What else can she do? She tears off her dress. She fastens it to the end of a pole, plunges it into the fire, and then runs along the line waving the blazing signal round her head. Her daughter seizes a piece of the blazing bedstead and follows her mother's example in waving it round. The next moment will decide the fate of a multitude of passengers. The ground trembles under the old widow's feet. The great red eye of the engine bursts upon her as it turns a sudden curve. The train is at full speed; but the driver sees that there is something wrong. A shrill whistle echoes through the hills. Its cry is—"Down brakes! down brakes!" The guard springs to his post, and bends on the wheels with the strength which desperation gives. The wheels move slower and slower, and the panting engine finally stops in front of the

widow's fire. It still gave light enough to show the bridge gone, and the yawning abyss, where the train and its passengers would have plunged into death and destruction, too horrible to think of, had it not been for the good widow's signal fire.

The guard, the driver and the whole of the passengers came to see what was the matter, and when they saw the bridge gone and the dreadful gulf into which they had so nearly plunged, we can imagine how they felt. They did not thank the widow first; but kneeling down by the side of the engine, in the dim light of the burnt-out pile amidst the rain and wind and pelting storm, they first thanked God, who had made use of the widow woman to save them from such a terrible death, and then, with many tears, they thanked her for what she had done. Then they made a collection for her on the spot. Afterward the railway company, on hearing of her noble act, gave her money enough to make her comfortable for the rest of her life. This was right, and generous, and noble.

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A DEIST said to a preacher:

"Do you preach to save souls?"

"I do," was the answer.

"Did you ever see a soul?" "No."

"Did you ever hear a soul?" "No."

"Did you ever taste a soul?" "No."

"Did you ever smell a soul?" "No."

"Did you ever feel a soul?"

"Yes, thank God."

"Well," said the deist, "there are four of the five senses against one, that there is a soul."

The minister said to the deist:

"You are a physician?" "Yes."

"Did you ever see a pain?" "No."

"Did you ever hear a pain?" "No."

"Did you ever taste a pain?" "No."

"Did you ever smell a pain?" "No."

"Did you ever feel a pain?" "Yes."

"But here are four senses against one," continued the minister, "that there is such a thing as pain; and yet, sir, you know that there is pain, and I know there is a soul."

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A BLIND girl came to her pastor and gave him a dollar for missions. Astonished at the large sum, the minister said: "You are a poor, blind girl; is it possible that you can spare so much for missions?" "True," she said, "I am blind, but not so poor as you think, and I can prove that I can spare this money better than those that see." The minister waited to hear it proved.

"I am a basket-maker," answered the girl, "and as I am blind I can make my baskets just as easily in the dark as with the light. Other girls have during the last winter spent more than a dollar for light. I have no such expense, and so have brought this money for the poor heathen and the missionaries."