

**"HOLD ON TO THE ROCK, SAMMY!  
HOLD ON."**

BY REV. EDWARD A. RAND.

"The storm is coming back over the mountains again, children," said the old gray-haired superintendent of the Sabbath-school in the little red school house. "And I think—"

Here Uncle John Graham, for that was his title among all the children, glanced nervously out of one of the broad windows, and caught amid the pine tops a glimpse of a dark, angry storm sky beyond.

"And I think," continued Uncle John, "we had better close as soon as possible. Some of you have a long way to go. We will sing, children, and then close with prayer."

The children's sweet voices were joined in the singing of one of the blessed Psalms that have been for the comforting of God's people in all ages, the one hundred and twenty-first. The superintendent caught one sweet voice soaring like a bird above all the others.

"That's Sammy," thought the superintendent, and he looked upon a boy's dark, earnest eyes, lifted, as it were, to the invisible hills ever over shadowing the Church of God.

"May I go along with you?" said the same voice at the close of the school.

"Yes, come with me, Sammy! Give me your hand, boy; and we will trudge on side by side," replied the superintendent, turning the key in the battered school-house door, and then halting one moment to watch his flock scattering down the country road or along the foot-paths leading across the green fields.

"Now, Sammy, I am ready," said the superintendent, seizing the child's little hand and covering it with his large, warm grasp.

"I thought, Uncle John," said Sammy, archly lifting his happy eyes to the big, open face kindly beaming down upon him, "You might like to have me go with you."

"Ha, ha, to look after me because I am so little? I am not to go with you so much as you go with me and look after me! Ha,

ha! Well, we can look after one another, and as we are neighbours, we can keep one another company very conveniently. Hark!"

The old man's merry, laughing mood ceased in a moment. With an anxious face, he listened.

"What is it, Uncle John?"

"Well, child, the country is full of water. The streams are all swollen, and what we are afraid of is that the dam back in the hills—the upper dam as we say—may give way. And there it is raining again!"

As Uncle John looked up, big, bold drops, without ceremony, splashed into his face.

"Couldn't we take the short way home, down through the valley?" asked Sammy.

Down through what was known as "the valley" went "Swift Stream," leading from the upper dam. Uncle John hesitated.

"It will shorten the way, Sammy, but—"

"Swift Stream too high?"

"Oh, we can get across, but—"

Uncle John again paused. He was rather uneasy about that upper dam.

"However, Sammy," said the old man with a hearty laugh, "I think that the idea is that you are to look after me, and come! I'll go your way."

Down through the shadowy valley they went, hand in hand, careless of the wind that blew harder every minute, of the rain that fell faster, of the increasing roar of the swollen stream in the bottom of the valley.

"The water is almost up to the plank-ing of the bridge, Sammy, but we don't care," said Uncle John, "We shall get across safe."

The passage of the bridge was made in safety, and they began to climb the half-rocky, half-wooded wall of the valley on the other side of the bridge. Suddenly Uncle John caught the sound of a tumult that was something more than the rage of Swift Stream. He thought he saw the white flash of a huge mob of foaming, driving waters.

"The dam, Sammy! Oh it has given way! Quick, quick!" he shouted, "Up in my arms, boy!"