

Nine, this wingless griffin skimming the land.

"She is a buffalo!" he exclaimed again, as the creature of iron and steel went rushing along, its eye of fire glaring, its throat shaking off a shaggy mass of smoke. Screaming at the cross-roads and defying the night, tearing through forests, rattling and rumbling across the open fields, rearing past the rocky cuts, away went the express.

"I'll give an extra whistle when we get to Rocky Brook," said Charlie.

"She won't be bird or buffalo then, but fish, boss," replied Bill.

"How so?"

"There may be so much water on the marsh that we must swim."

"I guess we are all right."

That was not so certain. Rocky Brook was a dainty, picturesque affair in summer, clear, sparkling, a strip of crystal mirror framed in drooping ferns and murmuring maples. When the long columns of the autumn rain went charging across the fields, it was not only a rocky but a roaring brook. When a winter thaw set in, it seemed to melt away the icy fetters of a mischievous water sprite in the brook, who went out to play some very mad pranks wherever it might find banks confining it or a bridge spanning it. The brook crossed by a bridge was always supposed to run under the railroad track but it had been known to express its contempt for this bridge, and boldly swept aside bridge, track, and any thing else in its way. At the time of our story, there had been a heavy rain cooling off into snow, and now by seven o'clock on the evening of this day, it was raining again. For hours the water-sprite had been roaming up and down Rocky Brook, bent on mischief.

Toward morning Sallie Some was wakeful.

"I wonder what time it is," she thought. "Let me find out. I wonder, too, how Brother Charlie is getting along with his train."

She went into the kitchen and scratched a match in the face and eyes of the dignified old time-piece behind the door.

"Almost half after five, and soon it will be time for that express train the smart young engineer is running. The booby, to think he could see anything I might wave before six! I'll go to the door and listen for any sound of the train."

Standing at the door under a leafless woodbine, holding her hand up to her ear, she listened intently.

"What is that! Is it the train coming? No!"

She turned as if listening to sounds from an opposite quarter.

"Horrors!" she exclaimed.

The next moment she had seized a lantern hanging on a nail in the entry. Lighting it, she then put herself in a water-proof, hastily drawing its cape over her head and locking like a nun about to leave her cell for early morning prayers.

Rocky Brook was at the left of the station; the train would come down the track shooting from the right. The suspicious noise that Sallie heard came from the left. She flew along the path from the house to the station, glided rapidly across the platform, and then rushed down the track to the brook. Swinging her lantern before her, she looked down—not upon a safe, passable bridge, but a torrent! The bridge was gone! Only a swollen

mass of water there, bits of white foam glistening on the surface like teeth that a water monster was showing.

"In a few minutes," thought Sallie, "the train will be here, and may God give me strength!"

She turned and flew up the track.

"Hark! Is that the express nearing the curve? There's a whistle! It must be at the Back Road Crossing. Quick! O! O—quick!"

The poor girl's heart bounded with fear. Rapid as was the flight of her feet, her heart seemed to be going still faster. The heavy ledge around which curved the track was only a hundred feet away, and nearing the ledge was that express train whistling at Birch Lane Crossing next.

"Quick, quick! There it is whistling again! May God help me!"

At that moment she stumbled, and headlong she went, the lantern breaking at her feet and the light going out! How she trembled! It seemed as if the stormy heavens were falling and covering her with their dense clouds, burying her in a hopeless grave. And there was the express train thundering on toward Rocky Brook. It must not be. She sprang to her feet. Where was her handkerchief? She could not find it, but there was Charlie's. She pulled it out, dipped it in the little pool of kerosene at her feet, and then, throwing out her water-proof on either side, she made a screen against the wind and rain.

"How glad I am that I took that card of matches with me when I went to find out the time at home. I'll light one," she was saying.

She ignited the handkerchief, threw the half-burnt match into the kerosene on the ground—a fruitless attempt—and then started up the track again, wildly waving her burning signal! Did she feel the smart of her singed fingers? She was only noticing a sharp glimmer of light around the curve, then a ball of fire, and finally it sharpened to an awful dazzle coming straight down the track!

"O stop! stop!" screamed Sallie. "Stop, Charlie! I'm waving your handkerchief as you told me! The bridge is swept away!"

The next moment she was conscious that something great, bewildering, terrible, had crashed past her, and now unconscious she fell beside the track.

Had Charlie seen the light? Thanks to the clear sight his good habits gave him, he saw the signal from the cab-window.

"A comet with a tail," Bill was saying.

"Danger, danger! Whistle 'down brakes!'" Charlie was shouting.

The sharp, clear shriek of the danger-signal cut the morning mist, and soon the heavy wheels began to turn less swiftly. The train rumbled on till the cow-catcher hung over the torrent and then stopped.

Charlie breathed as if some one had taken Mount Washington off his shoulders.

"Danger, you say!" he said to the conductor, hurrying forward. "Danger enough! Look at Rocky Brook!"

Above the berths and seats in the cars, a hundred sleepy heads were now bobbing up like seals above the water. Two hundred feet came hurrying from the train. What exclamations of congratulation when the passengers realized what an escape they had had! And Sallie, where was she?

"Who saved us!" was the question raised.

"Somebody back there," said Charlie, and when the mysterious "somebody" was hunted up by him and others, they found Sallie lying by the track unconscious, the red roses in her cheeks all turned to white ones. She was carried to her home, revived, and the doctor soon pronounced her out of danger.

Some one laid a hand on Charlie as he was hurrying about. It was Nathan Withers.

"I say, Charlie," he cried, "I think Rocky Brook had better be filled up. Here's my contribution to the fillin'."

Into the brook he pitched his flask and never bought another.—*Our Youth.*

### A DREAM OF HEAVEN.

BY DR. TALMAGE.

ONE night lying on my lounge, when very tired, my children all around about me in full romp and hilarity, and laughter—on the lounge, half awake and half asleep, I dreamed this dream. I was in a far country. It was not Persia, although more than Oriental luxuriance crowned the cities. It was not the tropics, although more than tropical fruitfulness filled the gardens. It was not Italy, although more than Italian softness filled the air. And I wandered around looking for thorns and nettles, but I found that none of them grew there, and I saw the sun rise, and I watched to see it set, but it sank not. And I saw the people in holiday attire, and I said: "When will they put off this and put on workmen's garb, and again delve in the mine or swelter at the forge?" but they never put off the holiday attire. And I wandered in the suburbs of the city to find the place where the dead sleep, and I looked all along the line of the beautiful hills, the place where the dead might most blissfully sleep, and I saw towers and castles, but not a mausoleum or a monument or a white slab could I see. And I went into the chapel of the great town and I said, "Where do the poor worship, and where are the hard benches on which they sit?" And the answer was made me, "We have no poor in this country." And then I wandered out to find the hovels of the destitute, and I found mansions of amber and ivory and gold, but not a tear could I see, not a sigh could I hear, and I was bewildered and I sat down under the branches of a great tree, and I said, "Where am I? And whence comes all this scene?" And then out from among the leaves, and up the flowery paths, and across the bright streams there came a beautiful group, thronging all about me, and as I saw them come I thought I knew their step, and as they shouted I thought I knew their voices; but then they were so gloriously arrayed in apparel such as I had never before witnessed, that I bowed as stranger to stranger. But when again they clapped their hands and shouted "welcome, welcome!" the mystery all vanished, and I found that time had gone and eternity had come, and we were all together again in our new home in Heaven. And I looked around and I said, "Are we all here?" and the voices of many generations responded "All here!" And while tears of gladness were raining down our cheeks, and the branches of the Lebanon cedars were clapping their hands, and the towers of the great

city were chiming their welcome, we all together began to leap and shout and sing:—"Home, home, home, home!"

### CRUCIFIXION.

BY AMELIA E. PARK.

**S**AINTE PETER, in his Roman cell,  
Sat musing through the lonely night,  
A vision held him in its spell,  
Until the dawn's first pallid light.  
Then Some One touched his folded hands  
And said: "Oh! haste, thou blameless  
man!  
The door a moment open stands,  
And none are near thy flight to scan!"

Then Peter, with unsandaled feet  
And robe unguarded, rose and fled;  
And life and liberty were sweet,  
As through the misty dawn he sped.  
He had forgot his heavy debt,  
Forgot that all but Christ was dead,  
Till in the open road he met  
The Saviour, carrying his Cross.

That piteous sight his footsteps stayed;  
His heart was faint with sorrow and pain  
"O Master! Is it thou?" he said,  
"Surely thou need not die again!"  
"Yes, Peter! If thou wilt not stay,  
And bear the Cross and shame for me,  
I for the flock must die to-day,  
Be crucified again for thee."

Then Peter kissed the pierced feet,  
His heart with love and sorrow burned;  
And full of strength and comfort sweet,  
Back to his prison cell he turned.  
Twas light, and soldiers faded the place,  
But Peter now could count life's loss,  
For he had seen the Master's face,  
And joyfully could bear the Cross.

Dear Christ, if thou wouldst have me take  
Some lone, sad path of Calvary,  
I pray thee, for thy own dear sake,  
That I may neither faint nor flee.  
Show me thy face with the command,  
And I can bear the grief or pain;  
Mine would not be the faithless band,  
To pierce thy wounds' heart again.

### SLIPPERY PLACES.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Maine Farmer* writes: "At the close of a bright cold afternoon I was going to my home from a neighbouring friend's, and by the way was crossing the street, when I saw a boy coming up on the other side slip into the snow. He was up in a half minute, and I saw he had no overcoat, no mittens, a cap without a visor and tattered clothes, but I soon found he had a noble heart beating beneath his ragged jacket. On getting up he shook the snow from his little hands, which were red with cold, curled them up under his arms and waited until I reached the other side, then said, 'Take care! It is slippery there.' The poor little boy was a young philanthropist without knowing it.

"I have often recalled the boy's kindly caution. Let me tell you a few of the times when I think of it. When I see a young man whose expenses exceed his income, I think, 'Take care! It is slippery there.' When I see one loitering around billiard-saloons and gambling-rooms, I think he is on a slippery place. When I meet one whose breath is tainted with strong drink, I want to say to him, 'Take care! It is very slippery there.' When I see a school girl who spends more time in the skating-rink than on her lessons, I fear she is on slippery ground. When I see a sweet girl talking at the street-corners or flirting with an immoral man whose breath is a taint upon her purity, I wish I could engrave on her heart, 'Take care! It is very slippery there.'"