

The Joys and Sorrows of a Poor Old Man.

OUR hero was born in Edinburgh, in the year 1828. Of his parentage little is known, except that his father was in some way connected with the army. He had no recollection of either his father or mother, for he seemed to have been turned out upon the world a bare headed and bare-footed boy. The first kind attention he recollected to have received from any human being was from a gentleman in Scotland, whose little son had fallen overboard from a skiff, and our hatless and shoeless boy had plunged into the water to save him. With this gentleman he had a home for several years. As he grew up, his thoughts turned to the business of life, to striking out for himself and earning a living. Being in a mining country he naturally took to that occupation.

But Thomas Briggs was born to be a leader, and he soon aspired to something other than the dismal life of an underground miner, although at this time he could neither read nor write. Without money, without teachers, and without books, he nevertheless set about the enter-

prise of learning to read and write. Noticing the tradesmen's signs upon shops and in shop windows, he soon learned the significance of letters and the meaning of words, and it was not long before he rejoiced in being both able to read and write.

He then became a contractor for sinking shafts to deep mines for various owners of properties in the mining districts. Being a hard-working, resolute man, he acquired a little property, and obtained a comfortable home. In the meantime he had married, and was soon blessed with a little family of children, which brought joy and happiness to his humble fireside. To provide for this increasing family he toiled continuously, and often in cold and stormy weather. Being a strong and robust man, he imagined that he could endure almost any hardship. In this he misjudged. Taking a severe cold, he returned home one night too ill to eat and too hot and feverish to sleep. His head felt as if it would burst. Although his devoted wife was alarmed, and wished to send for a doctor, he determined to brave the storm without

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