

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 enterprise 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 able to both 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 medical aid, and "wear out the disease," as he expressed it. For days he sat in his chair resting his aching head on his hand with his elbow on the table. In this, also, he made a sad mistake, for if he had taken a simple timely remedy, his pain and suffering might have been averted. Although he was shortly able to go out and resume business, still, he was not well. He would have frequent attacks of illness, and be confined to his house for days at a time, and these ill turns came on oftener and oftener. He soon began to have dizziness, or vertigo, so bad that he was often in danger of falling when rising suddenly from his chair. His tongue became coated, and a disagreeable taste destroyed all inclination to eat, and even what food he took lay like a load on his stomach and made his breathing difficult.

We speak of the poor man's sufferings with the more minuteness in order to show the noble and generous character of the man, for it will be seen that in all his long years of physical suffering and mental distress, Thomas Briggs never faltered in his devotion to his family. At the solicitation of friends he called a physician, but either the medical men mistook the nature of his disease, or their medicines were not adapted to his complaint, for he continued to grow worse and worse. His bowels had now become so sluggish and costive that he seldom had a movement

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