

hands together; "didn't I tell you if we could only find the fifteen rods brandy way, I wouldn't thank King George to be my grandfather? Now, Mr. Rider, jest hand out your brandy bottle. We haven't had a drop to day; and since we've worked brandy-way so well your way, I should like now to work it in Asa's way a little."

"I second that motion," said Asa, "for I'm as dry as a herrin."

They accordingly took a social drink of brandy and water, and drank health and success to him who should first hit the pot of money; and having sat down under a tree, and eaten a hearty meal from their basket, they returned to Mother Newbegin's to prepare for the labours of the coming night. They brought from their boat three shovels, a pick-axe, and a crowbar. The old woman eyed these preparations askance, and as she turned away, Asa thought he could discern on her features the deep workings of a suppressed laugh. The afternoon wore away slowly, for they were impatient to behold their treasures; and twice they walked to the spot, which was to be the scene of their operations, to consult and decide on the details to be observed. They concluded, in order to be sure of hitting the pots, it would be best to make their excavation at least ten or twelve feet in diameter, and in order to afford ample time to get down to them at about midnight, they decided to commence operations soon after dark.

"And now, about not speaking after we begin to dig," said Bill; "how shall we work it about that? for you know if one of us happens to speak a word, the jig is up with us."

"I think the safest way would be," said Asa, "to cut our tongues out, and then we shall be sure not to speak. Howsoever, whether we cut our tongues out or not, if you won't speak, I'll promise you I won't; for I've no idea of giving the old feller a chance to carry me off, I can tell you."

"Well," said Jonathan, "I guess we better tie some handkerchiefs tight round our mouths, as my wife said, and we can't be so likely to forget ourselves."

This arrangement was finally concluded upon, and they returned to the house. That night they took supper with Mother Newbegin, and endeavoured, by paying her a liberal sum for the meal, and by various acts of courtesy, to secure her good graces. She seemed more social than she had been before, and even, at times, a sort of benevolent expression beamed from her countenance, which caused Asa to pluck up a comfortable degree of courage. But when it became dark, and they shouldered their tools to depart, the old woman fixed her sharp eyes upon them with such a wild sort of a look, that Asa began to cringe and edge along towards the door, and when she added, with a grave shake of the head, that they had better look out sharp, or the Old Nick would have them before morning, his knees trembled, and he once more wished himself at home.

The party arrived at the spot. And first, according to previous arrangements, they tied handkerchiefs over their mouths. They then measured a circle round the stake, of twelve feet in diameter, and took their shovels and commenced throwing out the earth. The night was still and calm, and though the atmosphere was not perfectly clear, the starlight was sufficient to enable them to pursue their labours with facility. They soon broke ground over the whole area which they had marked out, and diligently, shovelful by shovelful, they raised the gravelly soil and threw it beyond the circle. In half an hour they had sunk their whole shaft nearly two feet, and were getting along so far quite comfortably, with bright hopes and tolerably quiet nerves. No sound broke upon the stillness around them, save the sound of their own shovels against the stones and

gravel, and the distant roar of the chafing ocean. But at this moment there rose a wild and powerful wind, which brushed down upon them like a tornado. The trees bent and quivered before it, the leaves flew, and dust and gravel and light substances on the ground, were whirled into the air, and carried aloft and abroad with great rapidity. Among the rest, Asa Sampson's straw hat was snatched from his head and flew away like a bird in the air. Asa dropt his shovel, and sprang from the pit, and gave chase with all his might. After following it about fifty rods, it touched the ground, and he had the good fortune to catch it. He returned to his companions, whom he found standing awe-struck, holding their own hats on, and rubbing the dust from their eyes. It was but a few minutes, however, before the extreme violence of the wind began to abate and they were enabled to pursue their labours. Still the wind was wild and gusty. They had never known it to act so strangely, or to cut up such mad pranks before. Sometimes it would be blowing strongly in one direction, and in one minute it would change and blow as powerfully in the other; and sometimes it would whisk round and round them like a whirlwind, making the gravel they had thrown out fly like hailstones. Black, heavy and angry looking clouds kept floating by, and sometimes they heard the distant rumbling of thunder. They had never seen such clouds before. They appeared to them like huge living animals, that glared at them, as they flew over, with a hundred eyes. Asa sometimes thought they looked like monstrous great sea-turtles, and he fancied he could see huge legs and claws extending from their sides; and once he was just on the point of exclaiming to his companions, and telling them to look out, or that monstrous turtle would hit them with his claw as he went over; but the handkerchief over his mouth checked him, and reminded him that he must not speak, and he only sank down close to the bank where he was digging. The clouds grew thicker and darker, but instead of adding to the darkness of the night, they seemed to emit a sort of broken, flickering twilight, sufficient to enable them to see the changes in each other's countenances, and to behold objects rather indistinctly at some rods' distance. Each perceived that the others were pale and trembling, and each endeavoured, by signs and gestures, and plying his shovel with firmness and resolution, to encourage his fellows to perseverance.

It was now about eleven o'clock, and having measured the depth they had gone they found it to be good four feet. One foot more would bring them to the money; and they fell to work with increased vigour. At this moment a heavy crash of thunder broke over their heads, and big drops of rain began to spatter down. Though nearly stunned by the report, they recovered in a minute and pursued their labours. The rain increased rapidly, and now began to pour down almost in one continued sheet. Although the earth below them was loose and open, and drank in the water very fast, still so powerfully did the rain continue to descend, that in a short time they found it standing six inches round their feet. One of them now took a pail and dipped out water, while the others continued to shovel gravel. Their resolution seemed to increase in proportion to the obstacles they met, and gravel and water were thrown out in rapid succession. The force of the rain soon began to abate, and they would in a short time have accomplished the other foot of digging, had not the loose soil on the sides of the shaft begun to come in by means of the wet, and accumulate at the bottom faster than they could throw it out. Several times it gained upon them, in this way, to the depth of some inches. While they were battling with this difficulty, and looking up at the bank to see where it would