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The Somerset Herald.

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A COMMON SORT OF A FELLOW.

I ain't got no taste fur glory,
Ner no hank'rin' after fame;
Don't keer of the gin'ral public
Never gits to know my name.
I don't give a continental
'Bout the turn o' politics;
Ain't a-runnin' fur no office,
Ner a-tryin' on no tricks.
'Course I want my reg'ler rations,
Want my three square meals a day;
'Nough to do to keep me busy,
'Cept what time I want fur play.
I do' want to be the wheel's hub,
I'll jest be among the spokes;
An' I do' want no more honor
'N the other common folks.

Tell you what I like—it's restin'
At the close o' winter day,
When the backlog's gittin' seasoned
An' the hick'ry's in a blaze,
Hitch my cheer a little nearer,
Stretch my arms an' legs, an' gap
Tell my spectacles an' paper
Goes a-tumblin' from my lap.
Git some cider from the cellar,
Git some apples from the bin;
Then to have a couple neighbors
Come a-droppin' handy in;
'Thout no style er no pertendin',
Jest all nat'ral-like, you see,
Ever' body seemin' homelike—
That jest suits me to a T.
Settin' roun' a roarin' fire,
Tellin' tails an' crackin' jokes,
Not a swell ner dude amongst us—
Jest us common sort o' folks.

Now, I take my common ideas
Into all I do an' say.
I've a common way o' singin'
An' a common way to pray.
Them that knows me best, I reckon
'Ll be willin' to agree
When it comes to bein' rev'rent
Th' ain't none rev'renter 'n me.
But I sometimes have to wonder
When I'm settin' in a church,
An' the folks look skeert to touch me,
Feared I give their clothes a smirch.
Yes, it kinder makes me wonder,
When they draw aside their cloaks,
Ef in heaven there's a special
Corner fur us common folks.

—*Chicago Record.*

OUT OF THE POORHOUSE.

BY HELEN FORREST GRAVES.

Mary Miller came home from the factory upon that April evening with a light, quick step.

The sky was all a tranquil glow; the frogs were croaking in the swamp; the maples were crimsoned with their earliest banners of blossom; and as she tripped along, Mary found a tuft of violets half hidden under a drift of dead leaves—pale purple, scentless blossoms.

"The first violets always bring good luck with them," she whispered to herself, as she pinned them into the bosom of her blue flannel gown.

"Home" was scarcely the ideal realization of that poetic word to this factory girl. She and her mother lived in the upper half of a shabby, unpainted wooden house, with the blacksmith's scolding wife and seven riotous children down stairs, and one-half of a trampled-down back yard by way of garden, where nothing ever grew but burdocks, nettles and Mrs. Muggs' long-legged fowls.

But Mrs. Miller, who had been a school teachor once, and still retained somewhat of the refinement of her early education, had the tea ready, with a shaded lamp and a bunch of maple blossoms on the table ready for Mary to come home.

"Good news, mother!" the girl cried, lightly. "The Meadow Farm is to let! Mother, we must take it."

Mrs. Miller looked dubiously at the bright, eager face, with its bluegray eyes and fringes of yellow hair.

"Con we afford it, daughter?" she said slowly. "A whole house and a farm of forty-three acres."

"It isn't such a very large house, mother," pleaded Mary, as she laid the bunch of violets in her mother's lap—"not so many more rooms than we have here. And we could keep two cows, and I could sell milk and butter, and spring chickens and eggs; and I am almost sure that Will Davidge would work the farm on shares. And only think, mother, how delightful it would be to have a home all to ourselves, where we couldn't hear Mrs. Muggs boxing Bobby's ears, or Helen shrieking with the toothache! And a little garden, mother, where we could have peonies and hollyhocks, and all those lovely old-fashioned flowers that your soul delights in!"

Mrs. Miller's pale mild face softened.

"It is now a month since old Mrs. Dabney died," said Mary. "And they say that her daughter in the city and her son out in California despise the old farm, with its one-story house and its old red barn. So it is to let. And so cheap, too! Only a hundred and fifty dollars a year! Mother, we must take it! I'll leave the factory and turn dairy maid. I've saved enough, you know, to buy the two cows and some real Plymouth Rock fowls to begin with, and oh, it will be such a happiness! Say yes, mother—do say yes!"

When Mary Miller pleaded like this, the gentle widow never knew how to refuse; and the upshot of it was that they leased the old Dabney house, and became co-sovereigns of the realm of Meadow Farm.

It was their first night there. Over head the young May moon shone through a veil of purple mist. A solitary owl hooted in the chestnut wood back of the house, for Meadow Farm was situated on a lonely mountain side where no one ever came except on special business.

The Plymouth Rock chickens were safely shut up where foxes could not reach them nor minks steal in to bleed their young lives away, the cows—two fine young Alderneys—were chewing their cud back of the old red barn, and Mary Miller had flung a handful of cedar sticks on the hearth, where their scented blaze illuminated the old kitchen with a leaping brightness beautiful to see.

"Because it's just possible the house may be damp," she said, "after being uninhabited so long. There, mother, isn't that cheerful? And isn't it nice that our old rag carpet should chance to fit this floor so exactly?" with a satisfied downward glance. "And do you see those tiger-lilies? I found them down by the garden well—oh, such a red wilderness of them. Old Mrs. Dabney set them out herself, they say. It seems only yesterday," she added thoughtfully, "that I came past here and saw old Mrs. Dabney sitting in the big chair by the fire, just where—"

Mrs. Miller uttered a little shriek, and grasped her daughter's arm at this moment. Mary stopped short, with an ashy pallor overspreading her cheek.

For as she spoke the door opposite had opened and a very little old woman, silver-haired and shriveled like a mummy, came in, and walking across the floor seated herself in Mrs. Dabney's very corner—an old woman dressed in a snuff-colored gown which Mrs. Dabney had always worn, and wearing a snuff-silk cad, while a bag depended from her arm.

"It's cold, ladies," she said, looking around with a deprecating air, "cold for the season of the year—and they don't keep fires at Tewkstown."

"Mother," said Mary, recovering herself with a hysterical gasp of relief, "it isn't old Mrs. Dabney's ghost at all. It's old Miss Abby, come back from the Tewkstown Poorhouse."

"You don't mean," began the mild widow, "that Mrs. Daniel Dabney and Mrs. Everard Elberson let their old aunt go to the poorhouse?"

"Yes, it is quite true. Mrs. Daniel leads society in San Francisco, I am told, and Mrs. Elberson is a grand lady in Bridgeport, with a reception day and servants in livery. What could they do with a half crazy old aunt, who takes snuff and talks uncertain grammar? Poor Miss Abby. She has wandered back to her old home. She was eighty last birthday, and things are all misty and vague to her."

"But what shall we do?" said Mrs. Miller in accents of perplexity. "A crazy woman here! It doesn't seem just right, Molly, does it?"

"I'll take her back after she has rested a little and had a cup of tea," said Mary, cheerily.

"But perhaps she won't go."

"Oh, yes, she will," said Mary. "Poor Miss Abby! She is as gentle as a child."

Her words proved to be correct. Miss Abby Dabney suffered herself to be led unremonstatingly back to Tewkstown Poorhouse, where the matron read her a shrill-voiced lecture, and declared she would not be allowed another grain of snuff if she couldn't behave better.

Old Miss Abby smiled deprecatingly.

"They are peculiar people here," she said. "I think, my dear"—to Mary Miller—"they forget sometimes I am a lady. But it takes all sorts, don't you see, to make a world."

The next night, however, just as Mary and her mother were sitting down to tea, Miss Abby once more appeared, in the midst of a gentle shower of rain.

"I hope I don't inconvenience anybody," she said, meekly. "But that woman at Tewktown has cut off my allowance of snuff; and, after all, there's no place like home."

And once more Mary Miller patiently walked back with the poor old crone to the poorhouse.

The matron was infuriated this time.

"It ain't human natur' to stand this!" she declared. "I'll pat her in the jug!"

"The—jug?" repeated Mary, in surprise.

"It's a room down cellar where we shut up the troublesome cases," said the matron. "I cant't stand this running away business, and I won't!"

The "jug," perhaps, proved efficacious, for old Miss Abby Dabney did not appear again for a week.

At the expiration of that period, however, she walked noiselessly in just at dusk, and seated herself like a silent shadow in the chimney corner.

"It is so good to be at home again," said she, rubbing her wrinkled hands. "I somehow seemed to get lost of late. Elnathan is gone, and Betsy is gone, and I'm left here all alone. Yes, a cup of tea, please—sugar and no milk. They never remember how I like my tea at Tewkstown. This is good! And butter on my bread, too! We don't get butter at Tewkstown."

Mary burst into tears.

"Mother," said she, "Miss Abby shall not go back to Tewkstown! She shall stay here! Mother, how should I feel if you were wandering, friendless and alone, through the world?"

"But, my dear—"

"She shall sleep in her own old room, out of the kitchen!" persisted Mary. "She'll be no more care than a canary bird. Oh, mother, do consent! She will think then that she is still in her own home. Oh, if you knew how dreary it is at that Tewkstown poorhouse, with the grass all tramped out, and piles of clam shells lying around the door, and not so much as a dandelion or a daisy to be seen!"

And Mrs. Miller yielded to Mary's tearful solicitatons.

The Tewkstown authorities were but too glad to be rid of the poor old incubus, and Miss Abby Dabney settled down into her old home, as contentedly and unquestioningly as if she had never left it. She ate and drank but little; she talked less, and seemed to regard Mrs. Miller and Mary as guests, who had come to visit the old farm.

"The Widow Miller and her daughter must be rich folss, to undertake to support old Miss Abby," sneered one neighbor.

"She was well enough provided for at the poorhouse," said another.

"I never yet saw a farm succeed that was worked by women-folks," jeered a third.

"There'll be the biggest kind of a smash up presently," observed number four, "And an auction sale of everything; and I'll be on hand—for I don't deny that them little Alderney cows is s the cunningest creeturs I ever set eyes on, and good milkers into the bargain."

But time wore on, and there was no flutter of any red flag over the porch. On the contrary, matters throve, and Mary Miller declared joyously that "farming was a great deal more profitable business than working in the factory, and she only wished that she had found it out before."

Until one gray, autumnal evening Mary and her mother came back from a brisk walk to the village, and found a stalwart, sunbrowned man sitting opposite to Miss Abby, by the red glow of the fire.

The old woman rose up, in an odd, uncertain way.

"Ladies," she said fumbling in her old snuff-box, "this is my nephew, Cyrus Dabney—he ran away from home twenty-nine years ago come Michaelmas Day, and we all supposed was dead. Cyrus, these are the ladies who are so good as to visit me here. I don't quite recollect their names, but, then, my memory ain't as good as it used to be—and after all it don't matter much. Nothing matters mush nowadays!"

And Miss Abby sat down and fell into a "daze" again, as if all necessity for conversational effort were over.

Cyrus Dabney stood up—a bronzed, bearded giant, with dark eyes and superb statue.

"Ladies, I beg your pardon!" he said. "But s'posed when I came here, I was coming home. I knew nothing of all these changes. I never could have dreamed that my cousin would let this old creature go to the town poorhouse. I don't know who you are, ladies," with a husky rattle in his throat, "but I thank you from the very bottom of my heart for giving her a shelter in her old age. And if money will pay for it—"

"It will not!" said Mary, sharply, as if the words conveyed a slur.

"No, I s'pose not," said Cyrus with a sigh. "But I've plenty of money now. The dear old aunty shall live like a queen all the rest of her days, for she was good to me when all the rest set me down for a black sheep. I've made my fortune out in Panama and I've come home to redeem myself."

"I have heard of Cyrus Dabney," said Mrs. Miller, gently.

"And I'll venture, ma'am, you heard no good of me," said the young giant, with a short laugh. "I'll not deny that I was a wild boy enough, but there wasn't any actual evil in me, let folks say what they would. And now I've come back a rich man, and there's nobody to bid me welcome home except old Aunt Abby, out of the poorhouse."

He could not long have made this statement, however.

All the town was up to bid the rich government contractor welcome to Tewkstown within twenty-four hours. Human nature is human nature everywhere. But Cyrus Dabney cared little for the friendly overtures of the old neighbors.

Aunt Abby was the only person for whom he seemed to care, and his greatest grief was that the old woman refused to leave the old Dabney farmhouse to live in the stately brick mansion which he built on Prospect Hill.

And then he asked permission to deck her little bedroom with the curiosities he had brought her from the isthmus, and in tacking up draperies and arranging shells and old silver coins he and Mary became friends.

Friends! She never knew that it was anything else, until one day old Aunt Abby took a strange idea into her head. And Mary, holding a rich Oriental cord for Cyrus Dabney to loop into knots for picture frames, heard her introduce Mrs. Miller to a neighbor as "My guest, Mrs. Miller the mother of the young lady that Nephew Cyrus is going to marry."

Cyrus looked at Mary. Mary dropped the ball of cord and turned crimson.

"Mary," he said, "say that it shall be so. For I love you—yes I love you! And I can't live without your love. And—and you were good to old Aunt Abby when all the world turned against her. I sometimes think, Mary, that you must be like one of heaven's angels!"

And this was how they became engaged.

They still live in the old farm-house, the happiest of married lovers, and Aunt Abbey firmly believes that they are all her guests, for to her the world stands eternally still—the world that is so full of bloom and beauty to Cyrus and Mary.—*Saturday Night.*

Shoe Don'ts.

Don't think there is any neccessity for "breaking in a shoe."

Don't forget that science has removed all neccessity for endurance in this direction.

Don't try to wear a shoe that is too small, or that does not fit when it is first put on.

Don't fail, after having secured a comfortable fit, to keep it so by proper care.

Don't dry a wet shoe without first applying some oil or grease. Caster oil or tallow is the best. The steam generated in a wet boot will surely scald it and cause it to crack without this precaution.

Don't put shoes by the fire while they are wet, but let them dry gradually and slowly. Don't let the shoe become hard. Don't run it down at the heel. Don't wear it into the welt or insole. Don't forget that it pays to repair it in time, so that it will retain its shape and comfort.

Don't use too much force in polishing. A gentle brushing with a soft brush is better than the vigorous work of the bootblack. When the brushing makes your foot feel warm stop until your shoe cools off.

Don't put a pair of good shoes in rubbers—use an old pair for this and remove the rubbers as soon as you enter the house.

Don't try on or handle a patent leather shoe when cold—always thoroughly warm it before bending the leather. A patent leather shoe put on in a warm room may be worn out in the cold weather without injury.

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"AXIE,"

AND

The Other "Argonauts."

BY T. F. LIVESGOOD, M. D.

"Ever since the days of Captain Kidd
The Yankees think there's money hid."

The title of this article, as it "thunders in the index," may be somewhat misleading to the readers of the HERALD who are conversant with the classics. To them the writer wishes to say that while there is a Jason, he is here known by another name, and that the expedition in quest of the "Golden Fleece," instead of embarking at Colchis, starts in Elklick township and goes up into the mountains, to battle with sylvan gods, gnomes and dragons who guarded the treasure they coveted. Many people now living in the southern part of Somerset county recollect an eccentric, venerable-looking old man vulgarly dubbed "Axie" Yoder. The writer well remembers seeing him in Salisbury about the time of the "Harper's Ferry Insurrection," as it was then called. The people were very much excited for fully a week after the news reached Salisbury, and some predicted—and truthfully too—that it was the prelude to a civil war. "Axie" and "The Grammar King," J. J. Statzman, were discussing John Brown and the slavery question. "Axie" was at that time about seventy years old, very stooped, and had an asthmatic cough that could be heard quite a distance. He was an Amishman and wore the garb characteristic of that denomination. He walked with a staff in each hand. The Amish patriarchs counselled their people to avoid the trades and the professions; agriculture was to be their vocation.

"Axie" was a blacksmith and a chemist, and, although there is no tradition that the church ever reprimanded him, it was well known that his vocations were far from orthodox. The superiority of his axes earned for him the *alias* "Axie." Expert axmen declared that one of "Axie's" axes would outwear three of those imported from Pittsburg or Baltimore. Great was the surprise of the citizens, when after his death his personal property was being sold at public auction, to see the retorts, crucibles, mortars, blow-pipes and other chemical apparatus that were brought out of the laboratory. In his chemical experiments he discovered a process for hardening or tempering steel, which gave to his cutlery an edge so keen and lasting that it quite rivalled the Damascus steel or the Toledo blade. "Axie" was also an inventor. The process of making nails at that time by hand was a slow and tedious one. Besides, it made nails expensive, though labor was cheap. A machine for stamping them out of sheet metal, as is now done, was invented by "Axie." The persons who saw the model say it was a beauty. Instead of going to Washington and securing a caveat, he went around exhibiting it and trying to sell it to the iron manufacturers at Pittsburg. A shrewd man saw the possibilities of the invention, copied it, procured a patent and became rich at "Axie's" expense.

During his palmy days his forge was located at "Yoderstettle," now Mechanicsburg, and he employed as many as five journeyman blacksmiths and had several apprentices. There was always a demand for more axes, drawing knives, chisels and small cutlery than he could supply. Had he not been a visionary he might have spent his declining years in luxury, instead of striving as he did at hard labor to earn his daily bread. Over the forge, in the loft, at Mechanicsburg, he had a room fitted up as a laboratory, which was always kept securely locked. No person by the chemist's permission was ever permitted to cross the threshold. As he often would remain in the laboratory for a number of days together, the citizens supposed that "Axie" and Mephistopheles, or even old "Hornie" himself, were in collusion, and no doubt thought he had as many devils harnessed and at work as Maister Michael Scott. One of "Axie's" patrons who lived in that vicinity was a man by the name of Felk. Felk was a practical joker and a man always bristling with curiosity. Often he sauntered into the shop, especially on a rainy day, to smoke and chat with "Axie," who, by the way, in a good humor was quite garrulous. One day Felk appeared at the forge, and noticing "Axie's" absence, asked where he had gone. One of the men replied: "He has been locked in his 'keumerly' — meaning laboratory — for three days. We can hear him, but have not once seen him in that time." Felk said, "I must see what this means," and started for the ladder leading to the loft and "keumerly." "No, no! you mustn't," shouted all the blacksmiths and apprentices in chorus. "He will not let you in, and if you disturb him he will kill someone in this shop before night, such is his anger." Felk was a powerful man and wherewithal courageous. He thought he saw a chance for some fun, and began the ascent to the regions above. He advanced to the door of the laboratory, and suddenly "Axie" heard

"Tapping,
As of someone gently rapping,
Rapping at his chamber door.
Only this and nothing more."

At first he paid no attention to it; but it increased in volume until it sounded like a regular *reveille*. Then a voice came from within, "*wer der teufel klappet?*" There was no answer, but the rapping continued. Felk was determined to solve the mysteries of the "keumerly," and was only waiting for the door to be unlocked. The blacksmiths incontinently fled, leaving Felk as they thought to his doom. Just then Felk heard the key slowly and stealthily turning in the lock and saw the door gently and cautiously opening. With all the force he could muster he rushed against the door, forcing it wide open and knocking "Axie" pell mell amongst his glass apparatus, making quite as much havoc as a bull in a china shop. "Axie's" wrath knew no bounds. "A bull of Bas'ian" was a lamb in comparison. He would probably have slain Felk on the spot had he not been the larger and more powerful man and ready to do battle then and there. "Axie" rushed out of the "*keumerly*" and down into the forge where he raged like a wild beast. He threw all the hammers and other movable things out the windows, knocking sash, glass and all into smithereens. He broke everything that would yield to his strength and filled the air with his imprecations. When Felk had finished his inspection of the ruins he had made above, he came down and saw "Axie" in a corner of the forge utterly exhausted. It required several days before "Axie" recuperated sufficiently to resume his labors. The charm of his "keumerly" was broken and so was much expensive chemical apparatus.

This rather prolix sketch of "Axie" may be pardoned when it is known that he is the chief of "The Argonauts."

Quite a number of the Somerset County pioneers came from the palatinate along the Rhine. With them they not only brought "Die Niebelungen Fables", which furnished material for Wagoner's best operas, but innumerable ghost stories, witch stories, and a budget of superstition which was so firmly engrafted on posterity that even all the training of the public schools has not entirely eradicated it. At that time pilysicians were a scarce article and fortunately there was little sickness. The medicine for adults were whiskey, a mixture of whiskey and garlic, and general blood-letting. When a child too young to describe its symptoms cried with earache it was dosed with a mixture of onions, garlic, hogslard and molasses. If these failed to cure in a few days, the grannies held a caucus and pronounced the child bewitched. A *hex* doctor was at once sent for and the incantations began. Mothers kept scissors and horse shoes in the cradles to keep off the witches. The divining rod was in common use. However, an instrument that was much spoken of and greatly coveted, an "*erd speigle*," was not seen up to the time of a certain dame, yclept "Moll Dell." This instrument was supposed to give the person who possessed it the power to see through the various strata of the earth and to discover hidden treasure and gold, as well as the baser metals. "Moll Dell,"—a shrewd, designing "Ann O'Delia Deedeur," person—claimed she had such an instrument, and most people believed her. Among them was "Axie" Yoder. Whether true or false, we know not, but it was the creed of the early settlers and some of their descendants, that when General Braddock cut his way through the forests, on his march to Ft. Duquesne, he had with him large chests of gold and silver coin. Most of the time the men and horses had all they could do to carry provisions and the munitions of war and he found he would have to abandon the treasure. Places along the route were selected and it was buried with the expectation that they would exhume it when they returned. The fate of the brave, impetuous and toolhardy British General is too well-known to recapitulate here. Some of the soldiers it is said returned years afterward and tried to find it. The landmarks had been changed and none of them ever succeeded. A number of other persons came from different sections of the country in quest of the treasure with no better results. The most promising locality was always thought to be near the old Braddock Road, along Pine Run, in Elk Lick, and Garrett county, Md., about three miles south-east of Salisbury. Those who can recall the Pine Run locality twenty years ago will remember it as a howling wilderness; its approaches were through a dense forest, at places so thick with laurel that a man had to pick his way foot by foot. The banks of the run are almost perpendicular at those places and forty feet high, forming a regular canyon. Fishermen who ventured there (the trout fishing was no where better) had to wade in the middle of the stream.

"Axie" had made some money at his trade and was bequeathed a large nugget by his father. He had for years made the search for the treasure his day dream. Now he was in position and he determined to lose no time in carrying out his plans. "Moll Dell" had filled the country with "what she had seen" in her "erd speigel," and was thought more valuable to "Axie" than was ever Malinche to Cortez and his band of brave Spaniards. He at once engaged her and she became the oracle of the Argonauts from that time. Considerable digging would have to be done and "Axie" employed "Sassafras," Solly Ramsparger, Red Jake Lichty, a man whose soubriquet was "Suckamock," and several other firm believers to assist in the work. Everything being in readiness the Oracle "took observations" and said the treasure was located on the banks of Pine Run, about three miles south-east of Salisbury; that it was in an iron box about twenty-five feet under ground. She gave specific directions how it should be approached and said it was guarded by a dozen "*erd geiste*" or gnomes. The Argonauts found it a hard matter to get provisions and whiskey enough there to last them the required time. With much difficulty they, however, at length managed it and work was begun. The oracle stated that when a certain amount of ground had been excavated she must be notified and more "bearings must be taken." She was paid her fee and departed. After nearly a fortnight had been spent blasting through the hard rocks, it was thought they had reached the prescribed depths and "Moll" was sent for. She came and took observations. What must have been the surprise to the Argonauts when she announced that they had gone two feet deeper than she had told them. In consequence the charm was broken and the "erd geiste" had carried the treasure a quarter of a mile further up the run. Nothing daunted "Axie" packed his camp equipage and moved to the spot directed. The work was vigorously prosecuted here for several weeks, the Oracle making observations from time to time without reduction of fees. One day she appeared unheralded and announced that she had a vision the day previous which would make them all happy. She said the iron box they were digging for contained no more than $3,000 in silver, while on the opposite bank was buried a hair trunk that contained nearly $200,000 in gold guineas. She had also seen in her "earth glass" that the silver they were digging for was much deeper than she first supposed and that it would take nine months and nine days to reach it, while the hair trunk could be reached in about two months. The camp was at once moved across the creek and the work begun without a moments delay. A great pit was excavated at this point that would contain several ordinary two-story houses, much of it being through hard rock which required blasting. Vestiges of these pits are still to be seen at the present time. The Oracle had to be consulted often during the progress of the work. During the autumn, when "Axie's" capital had been pretty well exhausted and his patience sorely tried, his "Fidus Achates," the Oracle, appeared and in her most solemn manner began to take observations with the "earth mirror." She said they were within a few feet of the trunk and all work must cease until the following Friday night at "low twelve." That was Tuesday. Then she directed that guards be procured and the rifles should be of the "Bixie" Mier's latest pattern; they were to be loaded with silver bullets, said bullets to be cooled in the blood of a black cat. The "erd geiste" and dragons, who would fight desperately, were, she said, invulnerable to ordinary lead. "Red Jake" Lichty, afterwards declared, in his vernacular, that half an hour before "Moll Dell" appeared the bottom of the pit was covered with green snakes, toads, "ugly and venomous," and red lizzards. Instead of ground and rock they were shoveling these reptiles, all of which "Sassafras Solly" was ready to affirm with an oath if necessary. One of the most desperate characters in that country then was an old soldier of the war of the Revolution—Davie Seibert by name.—He was one of the soldiers sent on picket the night Washington said "put none but Americans on guard," and feared not man, beast nor devil. "Axie" engaged him and "Suckamock" for picket duty. The forces were on the spot at the appointed hour, thirsty for gold or gore. Strict orders were given that not a word should be spoken, even not a whisper, while the work was in progress. All communications were to be made by signs. If any one spoke all would be lost. The pickets were posted and orders given to shoot only if the gnomes and dragons attacked the workmen in the pit. One of the Argonauts afterwards told the author that at the first stroke of the pick there was a noise in the tree tops as if a thousand frightened turkeys had been left loose and were flying against each other and in all directions. Two of the boldest of these dragons, with wings larger than eagles, flew so near one of the guards that he knocked his hat off, while he dodged to escape being struck, a limb that was knocked down on the other side struck him on the shoulder and almost dislocated his arm. He began to feel that "if we escape Scilla we are sure to be wrecked on Charybdis." At this moment the Oracle was seen waving her hands above her head, and all work ceased. She tried her glass and beckoned "Red Jake" Lichty to dig at a certain point. Then she took the pick and raised it carefully herself. She worked but a few moments when she thrust her hand into the cleft of a rock and motioned to "Axie" to come and do likewise. "Axie" almost fainted with delight; he felt the hair on the trunk and the guineas were sure. Each one of the party was called, one by one, and made the same inspection. All they now had to do was pry up the rock and the treasure would be theirs. Reader imagine the excitement of that moment. All went back to their posts and the work of ra