

A Remarkable Entombment.

In Geikie's *Geological Sketches at Home and Abroad*, we have the following remarkable instance of an entombment in a mine in the year 1825. The story runs somewhat as follows:

A creep (cave-in) came over the mine and scared the men out, but a miner named Brown happening to leave his jacket (a new one by-the-by) in his room, returned by himself to fetch it. During the time he was gone, a heavy fall occurred which shut him off from the only outlet there was left. It was 23 days before the rescuing party reached the man, but he was still alive and able to speak, and, after a few hours, to give some account of his terrible experience, without a particle of food and only mine water to drink. It seems that he never lost consciousness or belief that he would be rescued, as he could hear the workers approaching his place day by day. But in the end, as he grew weaker, he had stumbled across the road way and fallen in the position in which he was found. On bringing him into daylight, a sight never seen before, and never to be forgotten, presented itself. The coal-mine fungus had spread over the poor fellow's body as it would have done over a rotting log. His beard had grown bristly during his confinement, and all through the hairs the white fungus had taken root. On a friend pulling off the fungus threads, he pushed the hand aside saying, "Na, noo wad ye kittle (tickle) me?" A more ghastly figure than he was could hardly be pictured. His face wore a strange sallow hue like that of a mummy. His flesh seemed entirely gone, nothing left but the bones, under a thin covering of leather-like skin. The doctor said he could distinctly feel the inner surface of the backbone on putting his hand over the pit of the stomach, so completely wasted away was he. However, the shock had been too much for him; he only lived a few days. This poor miner's lower extremities were not human at all—for he was cloven-footed; and this fact was calculated to make the traditional and superstitious Scottish miner not so sure whether this man, who might be said to have risen from the dead, was not the "deil" in disguise after all.

A tombstone bearing the following inscription marks John Brown's grave in the quiet churchyard of Dailly:

"In memory of
John Brown, collier,
Kilgrammie coal pit, by a portion of it having fallen in,
Oct. 8th, 1835,
and was taken out alive,
and in full possession of all his mental faculties,
but in a very exhausted state,
Oct. 31st,
having been twenty-three days in utter seclusion
from the world, and without a particle of food.
He lived for three days after,
having quietly expired on the evening of
Nov. 3rd,
aged 66 years."

Funding the Natural Gas Debt.—The Board of Natural Gas Trustees, of Toledo, O., in suggesting the funding of the natural gas debt of that city, made the following statement: "The immense drain upon the gas fields for the last 4 years has seriously affected the gas produced in the territory where most of the wells belonging to the city are located, and the rock pressure of the gas wells (which is the force by which the gas is driven into the pipe line), has diminished from 370 to 120 pounds, thereby very seriously diminishing the quantity which the pipe will carry, and we are now confronted with a shortage of gas for the supply of people who rely on us for a supply of that fuel, and without which there will be failure, not only to supply the needs of our people, but also of an income to increase the supply, and at the same time pay the debt incurred by the city in building the works. The trustees have territory comprising some 2,000 acres where the rock pressure is still undiminished, and where a reasonable expectation may be entertained of providing for the wants of the city, and there is more that is offered, and can be purchased, if the trustees were so situated financially as to obtain it."

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Mining Laws Affirmed.—The Supreme Court of West Virginia handed down its decision on March 22nd, affirming the constitutionality of the act recently passed by the legislature, regarding certain additions to the mining laws of that state. In accordance with the decision rendered by the court, employers are forbidden to issue scrip or checks to employees, such scrip or checks to be exchanged for goods at the store of the employer. The operators are likewise required to pay the miners according to the weight of coal mined, but before it is screened. This presumably settles these points once for all in the little Mountain State.

Another Mode of Making Briquettes.—The conversion of coal dust into fuel has for a long time been accomplished by various simple methods, differing but slightly in their details; but it has recently been pro-

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posed, instead of the usual plan of using pitch to cement coal dust together to form briquettes, to resort to substances of a glutinous or a farinaceous character, these including those obtained from wheat, barley, rye or other cereal or vegetables, 5 per cent. to 95 per cent. of coal dust being found to constitute a suitable proportion. The mixture may be kneaded by hand and sets in a short time, so that moulding under pressure is not really essential, though moulding may be resorted to for securing rapid manufacture. The product is said to burn with less smoke than the ordinary briquettes, and it is claimed that, in the matter of cost, the new article is the more economical. Ashes, or refuse matter from coal fires, with or without fresh coal, may also be utilized.

Geological Survey of Canada.**Annual Report, 1888-89,**

VOL. IV.

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