

feet wide: as we descended along, we had some difficulty in preserving our footing, for the coal has an inclination like the roof of a house, or "dips" about one foot in three. After going some distance, we passed through a door, and within a few yards, a second one; this, our guide informed us, was to prevent the air taking a wrong course; for one door had to be shut before the second one was opened, and thus the current was never diverted from its designed road.

We now came into a part of the Mine where the men were at work, and the air felt much fresher and purer; we descended another steep *incline* where deep ruts were worn by the sleds of coal sliding down them; for the road is too steep for wheels. At the bottom of this incline, stables had been made in one of the old workings or "boards," for a dozen horses, and at the entrance a trough of water for them to drink from; which water was so clear and fresh, always running out of the solid coal, that you could see a pin at the bottom of the trough; and it pleased the taste as well as the eye: such a spring would have been invaluable in many places. The horses thrive by it and their *keep*, for we never saw finer, sleeker creatures, and their polished coats would have done credit to any gentleman's groom. We were told they were very healthy, and except from accidental causes, remained a long time in the pits.

We now proceeded on our journey, and soon reached the bottom of one of the shafts, up which the coal is raised: it was about two hundred and fifty feet deep, and lined all round from top to bottom with plank, to prevent accidents from the stone or slate falling out of the sides, and injuring the men while working below. We looked up, and although the day was fine and sky clear, we could not distinguish any stars; and therefore, doubt the report of their being visible from the bottom of a well or pit during daylight; or else conclude that there was not a star at the zenith, just at the time we were taking an observation.

We again descended by another steep incline, and passed near the engine-pit, down which we heard the water rushing. This stream is thus directed that it may assist in carrying the cool air down into the Mine; and after running its course round the works, passes over the furnace-fire, and by expansion, is ejected again into the upper air, where all the noxious gases it has absorbed are soon dissipated.

After reaching the bottom of the lowest pit, we turned off and walked along the railroad, by which the coals are conveyed to the shaft; again we passed through double doors; but here a black-faced, but cheerful looking little fellow of some twelve years old, opened the door for us; and we learned that he is called a "trapper;" that his sole duty is to open and shut these doors during the hours that the pits are at work. His rank is the lowest, or initiatory one in the scale of pit employment: this led us to inquire how