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# Mr. English's

## Criticism of Mr. Howley's

### Lecture on Our Coal Areas.

Editor Evening Telegram.

Dear Sir—It is regrettable that a question of so much vital importance as this one of coal cannot be conducted in a fair and broad-minded manner. Snobishness runs riot through every effort of those against whom I am contending. It is high time that the iconoclastic hatchet be applied to the poisonous growth which has too long kept the genius of this country in check. Where snobbery is permitted to usurp the place of healthy and sturdy worth, there exists an atmosphere in which genius cannot thrive, and a country dominated by snobs cannot advance, but is retarded by the chilliness of the reception given to the honest efforts of her sons, who are not of the caste of snobs. We are expending large sums of money in this country in the cause of education, and our ears are assailed by the cries of those who would still further advance the cause. We hear it all around us, give us more education. Give our young men and young women a chance to train themselves for the higher walks of life. Why do we want to educate them? Is it that we may torture them later on, when their trained minds will venture to express the fruits of the education we have given them? Is it that the caste of snobs may have sport with them? Is it that we may wound them by shafts of snobbish contempt? Last year, it will be remembered, we had an exhibition of this nasty spirit when McGrath put me up against Mr. Howley and in derision asked his readers whom they would have, English the cook, or Howley the scientist?—the scientist he referred to as Professor Howley, which is snobbishness refined. He also stated that English had been with Mr. Howley as cook, and the following day convicted himself by saying, English was not the cook, but the cook's helper. Both of those assertions are his, as I had never been with Mr. Howley in any capacity. Now, while I am on the subject of education, permit me to refer to an example of how technical education is encouraged in this country. There is a young man on Water Street who has set up an assay office in the hope of getting some work in that line. He is well qualified to do the work, but

Very Little of the Government Patronage comes his way. It goes to Mr. D. James Davies, B.Sc., F.C.S., who seven years ago graduated from a foreign college. I wonder if snobishness has any part in it. Now I make no pretence to scholastic attainments, but I think that my years of patient labor in the field of geological science should entitle me to more consideration than has been shown me by Messrs. Howley, Davies and Robinson of the "News." Leaving Mr. Robinson out of the question, for he possibly knows but little of the science and therefore is not competent to judge, but takes the side of the big guns, where he thinks safety lies. Neither Mr. Howley nor Mr. Davies can tell my arguments, for they are based on solid scientific facts. Mr. Howley in his ultra snobbish letter, very conveniently ignores the point I have raised relative to the position of our coal seams in the carboniferous system. Mr. Howley says: "It is only a waste of time and of your space to discuss whether we have the true coal measures here or not, whether fossil calamities belong to Devonian, Carboniferous, Permian or any other series of rocks." Now as to the first part of that very odd sentence, I think it strange that a man undertaking to lecture on the coal seams, should think it not worthy of notice whether we had the true coal measures or not. It is a matter of the utmost importance, and one which the scientific man is bound to begin his investigations with. As to the latter part of the sentence it is just ridiculous.

**Remarkable Escape from Starvation.**  
Extract of letter from D. V. D. James Davies, Esq., of the late baronet, "The Starvation" of Glasgow. "Having lost our ship on the 5th of July, and having saved neither effects nor provisions, we were compelled to travel on the island for ten days, subsisting on nothing but shell-fish and seaweed. On the 19th of July we came across another shipwrecked party of seventeen, the surviving part of the crew of the British ship "Dunkirk" of Glasgow, fourteen having perished through exposure. Now the ship was lost on the 23rd of June, and a lot of the cargo consisting of Epps's Cocoa, was washed ashore out of the wreck. There was made up saved except the Cocoa and six, numbering twenty-five men, were kept alive on it up to the vessel, when we were rescued by the steamer "Mercurio" of Bristol. "Too much praise cannot be given to this Cocoa. We had a good stock of it, and used it in a liquid state for drink, we also baked it for 6 weeks on this barren island, situated in a region of perpetual ice and snow."

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nothing more or less than the decayed leaves and bark of the plant life of the period" which is a gross inaccuracy. Coal is often made up very largely of the remains of marine and fresh water growths, and if I were delivering a lecture on coal I could describe some of that form of coal that has come

Under My Observation, but as it is not a lecture I am giving but a criticism of a lecture, I must confine myself solely to that purpose. According to Mr. Howley it is estimated that during the carboniferous period "such common trees and shrubs as the fir, spruce, pine, larch, birch, alder, etc., had no existence. The only plants of our time at all resembling those of the above period are certain trees of Australia and some bamboo or cane, but they are not the same." All that is in the main true, but it is not true enough, when coming from a lecturer on scientific matters. He could have told his listeners that during the carboniferous period that flourished as far back as the Upper Devonian period. Comes resembling those of our spruce and fir, as well as the woods are not uncommon among the carboniferous flora. Next Mr. Howley tells us that canal coal is soft. Canal coal is so hard that it can be cut and highly polished and used for various ornamental purposes. By a peculiar gradient or sort of sliding scale Mr. Howley leads up from the most valued coal containing small amounts of carbon, through various stages of increasing carbon and lessening volatile matter to the point at which he can present to bridge the gap between coal and the diamond is a marvel. It does not follow that because coal contains carbon that it is related to the diamond which is of course pure crystallized carbon. It would be just as logical to string a line of sequences from blood to the steel rail is iron refined. It is notable that in his lecture Mr. Howley devotes a great deal of attention to graphite and the diamond. We have now come to that most interesting part of the lecture, namely, a short discourse on the geology of the carboniferous rocks of this country and to the gentleman that night in the Board of Trade Rooms, expected when that point of the lecture was reached that we were about to hear something about our coal areas.

But We Were Disappointed. All Mr. Howley gave us on the subject of our coal areas, except from any text book on geology, and probably in a clearer way than Mr. Howley gave it to us. However he said one thing about our rocks which is quite misleading, i.e., that in this country we have the three lower members of the carboniferous system well represented. Those members are (taking Mr. Howley's division of them) the carboniferous limestone, the millstone grit, and the true coal measures. That is not true for fossil evidence proves the absence of the Upper Productive Measures and the Permian, and those are the most valuable. Why didn't Mr. Howley describe more particularly the carboniferous rocks of this country and leave generalities alone? Next Mr. Howley makes a grievous error in his use of the word basic for basal. He speaks of "basic conglomerate," when basal conglomerate is meant. Mr. Howley makes the same mistake in several places. In describing Bell Island in that report of 1898 he speaks of "basic members stretching along the shore." The word basic is used in chemistry to denote an oxide or hydrate of a metal, or a group of elements equivalent to a metal capable of replacing the hydrogen of an acid when the two are placed in contact. When we have reference to a basement or foundation we say basal and not basic. Three different times in the course of his lecture Mr. Howley makes the same wrongful application of the word. Again, Mr. Howley is quite in error when he speaks of the thickness of the strata underlying the coal measures of Cape Breton. The geology of Canada gives a total thickness below the productive measures of 8,500 feet (estimated). Mr. Howley tells us there are between 1,800 and 2,000 feet which

leaves quite a hiatus. The total thickness of the carboniferous strata of Cape Breton is estimated at 13,000 feet, which would leave a thickness of 4,500 feet of Coal Measures. Then the lecturer goes on to say that "some few workable coal beds do occur in Scotland, low down in the carboniferous series, even beneath the millstone grit formation," and still no reference to the position of the local coal seams in the series. He might have mentioned that thin seams of coal occur in Devonian rocks of Gaspe, and elsewhere. Next the lecturer tells us that "coal has only been in general use for heating purposes for a little over a century." He might have gone further in that direction and told us when coal first began to be mined in Cape Breton, over 200 years ago. Further on the lecturer remarks, "as regards the existence of coal in this country, I would ask the question, Why should there not be coal here?" and then goes on to assert that we have "the same series of rocks which contain the chief coal deposits of the world are found here." That statement is not true, for as I have long ago pointed out we have

Only the Basal Members of the series and they are the least valuable. Even if we had the whole system developed, which may be of the carboniferous limestone to the top of the Permian system, it would not follow that we had valuable coal measures, not by any means, though it would be quite probable. In the Western part of America there are no productive coal measures in the Carboniferous system. As proof that we had the same series of rocks that produce the valuable coal seams of Cape Breton, the lecturer exhibited a suite of three or four fossils, and pointed to every one acquainted with geology that we have only the lowest part of the series. And as I have remarked before one cannot be sure from such fossil evidence if we have carboniferous rocks at all. They may be Devonian fossils. The remainder of Mr. Howley's lecture is devoted to pointing out the location of the different coal outcrops and their respective measurements and offers no ground for criticism, except saying that Mr. Howley does not seem to have the faculty of conveying to others the knowledge which he doubtless possesses. If I have dealt rather roughly with him, I wish it to be borne in mind that my country's interest alone urges me to the course. We have much to be grateful to Mr. Howley for, notably his great optimism, and I may say this much that although differing with him so greatly on many points, I would be willing to put my small sayings into any plan that might be formulated for the prospecting of those coal seams in Bay St. George. Why could not a company be formed here for their development. Shares might be sold at a rate to admit even the poorest holding a few. Before anything is done in that direction, it would be the duty of the Government to have an examination made of the area. For the sake of our country we should be willing to take a little risk, but it will not be a blind one if the Government will have a survey made before hand. It is not demanded of the Government that they count the number of tons contained in the measures. A thorough geological survey is all that is required. Money has failed to do anything. Well, we will see what change of Government will do for us, next year.

A. ENGLISH.

## Cable News.

Special to Evening Telegram.  
CHARLEROI, April 14.  
Suspension of work in the coal mines in this district was complete this morning, except that sufficient men remained at their posts to keep the machinery in good order, and the pumps working. Metal workers in the vicinity have only partially quit, but it is understood that, to-morrow the remainder will lay down their tools.  
LA LOUVIERE, April 14.  
The miners' strike here is in full swing. Not a man, beyond those necessary to keep the machinery working, is in the mines. All the factories are closed down, except the pottery works, which continue in full force. Street cars are operating as usual during the forenoon, as the strike of motormen is timed for 7 p.m. Some attempts were made to cut the wires in the vicinity.  
NEW YORK, April 14.  
To-morrow, the anniversary of the loss of the Titanic, the lantern and time-ball, erected in the crew men's Institute, as a memorial, will be dedicated. The ceremonies will be held on the roof at 3.15 p.m. Brief addresses will be made by Bishop Greer, Rev. W. P. Merrill and Dr. Henry Lubeck. This tower is identical with the accepted form of light-houses, with stairs in the rear, lantern gallery and fixed green light, visible at all the lower anchorage grounds of the harbor to Sandy Hook. Remounting it is a time-ball, which will be hoisted daily at five minutes before noon. At noon the time will be flashed over the wires from Washington, and the ball will drop. The building is situated just where the Island of Manhattan turns in the corner of South Street and Coenties Slip, and commands the attention of all vessels entering, whether by Sandy Hook or Hell Gate.  
LONDON, April 14.  
A milk can, filled with gunpowder, and connected with an electric fuse, was found this morning inside the railing surrounding the wall of the Bank of England. It was removed to the police station.  
LONDON, April 14.  
Kier Hardie asked Premier Asquith to-day, whether, in view of the fact that the proposed gift of three battleships from Canada had become an acute party question, he would suggest the dropping of the proposal. Mr. Asquith replied that he did not think it would be proper to interfere in a matter which was entirely for the consideration of the Canadian Government.  
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Union Blend Red . . . . . 30c. instead of 35c.  
Union Blend Blue . . . . . 35c. instead of 40c.  
Union Blend Orange . . . . . 40c. instead of 50c.  
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