

fanned them into greater fury. After spending several days in vain, the Council of Engineers decided to flood the mine. This, of course, was not decided upon until it became the opinion of those in charge that there was not a living soul in the workings.

All hope on the part of the bereaved of ever seeing their loved ones again fled when the decision of the Council became known. Up to this time the more sanguine believed it possible that some were still living in certain sections of the mine, but to turn in a flood of water would certainly drown those who might have escaped both fire and after-damp. However, objections on the part of a few miners and their friends could not be expected to prevail against the decision of the officials.

I must pass in silence the horror that crept into the hearts of the watchers as a gang of men with pick and shovel were ordered out to cut a water-course from the canal to the shaft. When completed, the water rushed in with great force. All hope was now gone! The curtain has fallen upon the last act in the lives of two hundred and fifty-two noble men—take them man for man—as noble as could be found the world over. As the rushing water fell into the deep, dark abyss, making a hollow muffled sound, and the heart-breaking cries and sobs of the widows and fatherless children fell upon the ear, I seemed to hear the old solemn words, "Dust to dust." Sleep on now, sleep on, until the last trump with awful sound shall awake the dead.

No one can imagine the gloom that from that day rested upon the whole neighborhood. Not only were there vacant chairs at home, but there were so many vacant places elsewhere. The Sabbath schools lost their teachers, one superintendent and very many scholars. Among those entombed in the mine were two local preachers, men of no mean ability. Musical circles too were broken on that fatal day, many a musician capable of rendering some of the works of the greatest Masters perished. One whom I well knew could, after the evening meal, sit down to the piano and delight himself and friends with selections from Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, or Mendelssohn. Another, as a vocalist, could win the applause of real lovers of fine music, by rendering Gounod's Nazareth in C or any of the bass solos from the great oratorios such as the Messiah and the Creation.

Thus perished a company of brave men. Brave? Yes, as brave as any who fought inside of Lucknow, or climbed the Redan before Sabastopol. The man who descends into the deep coal mines, there to toil amid dangers of which he is well aware, for mere bread, with no prospect of relief in old age, other than death or the cold charity of the world,