

mix it, and make it more breathable. Some time had to elapse before the messenger could make the circuitous journey, and meanwhile the foulness of the air had probably lessened. When the sieves came one of the miners agreed to advance into the darkness, and try to create a current of air; the rest were to follow. In a minute or two, however he rejoined them, almost speechless with fright. In winnowing the air with his arms, he had struck against a waggon standing on the roadway, and the noise he had made was followed by a distinct groan. A younger member of the gang volunteered to return with him. Advancing as before, the same waggon stopped them as their sieves came against the end of it, and again there rose from out of the darkness of the mine a faint but audible groan. Could it be the poor castaway, or was it only another wile of the arch enemy to lure two colliers more to their fate? Gathering up all the courage that was left in him, one of them broke the awful silence of the place by solemnly demanding, "If that's your ain groan, John Brown, in the name o' God, gi'e anither." They listened, and after the echoes of his voice had ceased they heard another groan, coming apparently from the roadway only a few yards ahead. They crept forward, and found their companion—alive.

In a few seconds the other colliers, who had been anxiously awaiting the result, were also beside the body of John Brown. They could not see it, for they had not yet ventured to rekindle their lights; but they could feel that it had the death-like chill of a corpse. Stripping off their jackets and shirts, they lay with their naked backs next to him, trying to restore a little warmth to his hardly living frame. His first words, uttered in a scarcely audible whisper, were, "Gi'e me a drink." Fearful of endangering