

had heard them working towards him, and from the intervals of silence and sound he was able, after a fashion, to measure the passing of time. It would seem, too, that he had been subject either to vivid dreams or to a wandering of the mind when awake, for again and again he thanked the sister of his master for her great kindness in visiting him in the pit and cheering him up as she did.

On the Sunday afternoon, when some of his old comrades were sitting round the bedside, he turned to them with an anxious puzzled look and said, "Ah, boys, when I win through this, I've a queer story to tell ye." But that was not to be. His constitution had received such a shake as even its uncommon strength could not overcome. That evening it became only too plain that the apparent recovery of appetite and spirits had been but the last flicker of the lamp of life. Later in the night he died.

So strange a tragedy made a deep impression on the people of that sequestered district. Everybody who could made his way into the little cottage to see a man who, as it were, had risen from the dead; and no doubt this natural craving led to an amount of noise and excitement in the room by no means very favourable to the recovery of the sufferer. But this was not all. A new impetus was given to the fading superstitions of the colliery population. Not a few of his old workfellows, though they saw him in bodily presence lying in his own bed and chatting as he used to do, nay, even though they followed him to the grave, refused to believe that what they saw was John Brown's body at all, or at least that it was his soul which animated it. They had seen so many wiles of the devil below ground, and had so often narrowly escaped with their lives from his treachery, that they shrewdly suspected this to be some