

cation of the terrors underneath. Constant exposure to risk hardens a man against an appreciation of his dangers, and even makes him, it may be, foolhardy. The Kilgrammie colliers had continued their work with reckless disregard of consequences, until at last the cry arose among them that the roof was settling down. First they made a rush to the bottom of the shaft, in hopes of being pulled up by the engine. But by this time the shaft had become involved in the ruin of the roof. A second shaft stood at a little distance; but this too they found to be closed. Every avenue of escape cut off, and amid the hideous groanings and grindings of the sinking ground, the colliers had retreated to a part of the workings where the pillars yet stood firm. Fortunately one of them remembered an old tunnel or "day-level," running from the mine for more than half a mile to the Brunston Holm, on the banks of the Girvan, and made originally to carry off the underground water. They were starting to find the entrance to this tunnel when they noticed, for the first time, that John Brown was not among them. Two of the younger men (one of whom told me the story) started back through the falling part of the workings, and found the old man at his post, working as unconcernedly as if he had been digging potatoes in his own garden. With some difficulty they persuaded him to return with them, and were in the act of hurrying him along, when he remembered that in his haste he had left his jacket behind. In vain they tried to drag him along. "The jacket was a new one," he said; "and as for the pit, he had been at a crush before now, and would win through it this time too." So, with a spring backwards, he tore himself away from them, and dived into the darkness of the mine in search of his valued garment. Hardly, however, had he parted from them when the roof