

ENGLISH COLLIERIES.

The colliers may be seen squatting along the roadsides like so many Hindoos, this habit having been acquired in the narrow coal passages a quarter of a mile below. As you pass through villages of this description, you must not be too thin skinned, for factory women and colliers alike are sure to express their opinion about you. Your height, appearance, dress, or anything else will be criticised, and turned into ridicule, for these people have a keen sense of the ridiculous. In some of the more uncouth districts, indeed, you ought to consider yourself well off if only half a dozen clouds whirl past your head! The colliers are a rough but kindly class. As regards their thorough independence, some of them imagine they can only show it by "currying" the stranger who might offend them in any way. But, at the same time, they are equally as ready to trouble themselves in order to do you a personal favor, and that too in scorn of fee or reward. Supposing you offer payment for such civilities as being shown some road or river, you have enquired about, and offer it to the man who has gone half a mile out of his way to oblige you, most likely his reply would be—"A wau! nouse o' thy brass!" In every roadside public house, if a score of colliers are drinking, you will be proffered a huge mug with, "Here, sup!" and a refusal would be the most direct way of insulting. Nothing could be noisier than the company of such men on the occasion of their regaling themselves on a Saturday afternoon—the only time in winter, except Sunday, when they see daylight. You would expect a fierce fight every minute; but this demonstration only carries off the superfluous energy, and the row ends with a song, in whose chorus every double-bass voice joins, or in some of the company giving a close dance on the wooden board laid into the sandy flagged floor for that purpose. The tales told of these men's recklessness in times gone by almost makes one's blood run cold. It was no uncommon practice, when a collier arrived a minute or two late at the pit's mouth in the morning, for him to leap into the middle of the black golf down which the cage was descending, and catch at the rope with as much ease and coolness as a New Yorker would leap on the footstep of a passing street car. This recklessness has been much circumvented since government inspection has been devised; but it shows itself as a splendid bravery whenever an explosion has taken place. If a coal-pit has a peculiar horror to a stranger who is in a safe condition, fancy what it must be a catastrophe of this sort has occurred, when roof and gallery have been shaken down, and the dreadful "after-damp" has wrapped scores of victims in its deadly folds! For a man to coolly descend a mine between four and five hundred yards deep, up which this insidious enemy has partly crept, and risk his life for the sake of rescuing the mangled bodies of his comrades, indicates a bravery equal to anything that ever was a light. There is none of the excitement of a battle to brace the nerve; but instead, the cries of a host of half-crazed women and children on the "bank," and a fearful expectancy, making the heart thump against the ribs with a force to unman a giant.

A FAMOUS GERMAN REVOLUTIONIST.—Dr. Johann Jacoby, just sentenced by the Prussian Government to a term of imprisonment for drafting resolutions against the forcible annexation of the Rhine territory, knows more of the intricacies of prison life than even Silvio Pellico. He is an old time consistent leader of the German Democratic party, and has always been in the van of political movement. In 1848 he wrote a memoir on the policy of the Government, for which he was sentenced to three years imprisonment. After 1848 he was a member of the first German Parliament, and then of the Prussian Chamber. He was a steady opinionist, and though speaking but rarely, made himself dreaded by his tact and management in the House. When the Parliament was forcibly dissolved, he returned to Switzerland, and hearing there was a process against him for treason, he voluntarily returned and fought the lawsuit successfully. He was again elected to his practice. He was subsequently a member of the new Chamber, and was sent to prison for sedition; and again for another fourteen months for his memoirs of Henry Simon. His persecution by the Government of Prussia has been unrelenting.

AFTER all, there is more true religion in acts of charity than in almost any other deeds of ours. The inhabitants of the Isle of Man are very hospitable. It is a proverb among them that, when one poor man relieves another, God himself laughs for joy. In that island poor rates and most other parochial rates are unknown; and there is not in the whole island either hospital, workhouse or house of correction, though in every parish there is at least one charity school, and often a small library. A collection is made, as in Scotland, after the morning service of every Sunday, for the relief of such poor of the parish as are thought deserving of charity. The donation is optional, but it is usual for every one to give something. Now, it strikes us that there is something of true Christianity in such a community as that. If every congregation of people would practice virtues like those, surely godliness would abound among them.

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