

A COAL MINE ON FIRE.

ACRES OF ANTHRACITE BURNING IN ITS SUBTERRANEAN HOME.

SCRANTON, Penn., Sept. 4.—A fierce subterranean fire which threatens the destruction of several acres of valuable anthracite coal is raging in No. 2 Colliery of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company at Olyphant, a few miles north of Scranton. The fire has been spreading since the 21st of August, when an extensive cave-in occurred at the mine and a number of men were severely injured by the explosion of firedamp that followed. The volume of gas that had accumulated was ignited by the lamps in the men's hats, and it is thought that some of the many "blowers" which rush through the fissures in the coal veins caught fire at the same time and in turn set fire to the coal. Ever since then there has been a continuous caving in of the roof, until about twenty-two acres have collapsed.

The men noticed fire in the place on Monday last, but thinking it was merely the wooden props used to support the roof that were burning, they paid no further heed to the matter until to-day, when it was discovered that acres of anthracite were glowing like a furnace and sending forth such an intense heat that it was not possible to go within forty feet of the nearest point at which the fire was visible. Immediately arrangements were begun to fight this formidable fire, which threatens such great destruction of property. A system of pipes will be laid at once from the surface for the purpose of pouring many streams of water against the flames. Before these can be made effective it will be necessary to cut through 140 feet of solid coal. This is necessary in order to give the fire fighters a chance to battle with the fierce element that has obtained such tremendous headway, as owing to the direction of the air current the men would speedily be overwhelmed by steam and gas should they attempt to throw water from what appears to be the present point of vantage.

The work of cutting through this formidable barrier will be conducted night and day under careful supervision. None but experts are employed as foremen, pipe layers, and coal cutters on this difficult and dangerous undertaking, and a regular watch is kept up to give warning in case gas should collect near the fire, as there is fear of another explosion.

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