

THE BURNING COAL MINE.

SCRANTON, Penn., Sept. 10.—The fire in the Delaware and Hudson Company's colliery, at Olyphant, is more serious than at first supposed, and the probabilities are that it will take weeks, possibly months, before it can be extinguished and the mine placed in working order again. Over a thousand men and boys have been thrown out of employment, and business has been partially paralyzed in the town of Olyphant by the idleness of this large army of wage earners.

As stated in a previous dispatch to THE TIMES the fire owes its origin to an explosion of fire-damp, which occurred on Aug. 21, by which a number of gasblowers, which rush through fissures in the anthracite, were ignited. These, burning steadily, set the coal on fire, and the air currents fanned the flames until the result was a great glowing furnace, acres in extent, two hundred feet below the surface of the earth. At the present time it is impossible to estimate the exact area of the fire. The great volume of sulphur generated by the burning mine and sent forth in all directions makes it dangerous to venture anywhere near the scene of the subterranean conflagration or to determine how far it has gone or is likely to go before it can be effectually checked. The mine could be flooded, but that would be a costly process, since Mine Inspector Blewitt estimates that, in case such a plan for extinguishing the flames should be adopted, it would take at least two years before the colliery could be placed in working order again.

The vein in which the fire is burning is one of the best in the entire series of coal strata. It is on rising ground and at such an elevation that, in order to place it fully under water, a flood that would rise almost to the mouth of the shaft would be necessary. The company hopes to be able to accomplish the desired end without resorting to such a costly expedient. Two lines of pipe of 5,000 feet each have been laid from the surface to the scene of the fire for the purpose of directing two powerful streams of water against the flames where they have gained the strongest headway. If this system does not prove effective, an effort will be made to wall in the fire, with a view to letting it exhaust itself within certain circumscribed limits. This latter plan involves considerable cost and would take a good deal of time, but money is of secondary consideration in the work of fighting the destructive element that has taken possession of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company's mine at Olyphant and casts a blight upon the business interests of the town.

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