

for several yards outside of where he was, leaving but a small space. It required eighteen hours of unceasing effort by nearly a hundred men to extricate him from his perilous situation.

The ore is brought to the mouth of the mine on the backs of men, in sacks made of raw hide, and holding about one hundred pounds. Whenever a sufficient quantity to load a drove of mules is extracted, it is thrown down the mountain slide, and then carried to the furnace at Jaquel. Only seventeen miners were employed; previous to this the number employed was one hundred. Whenever a richer vein was struck a larger number were employed, who could always be easily obtained by foreigners, the natives preferring to work for them, as they say whatever the profits or losses may be, they are sure of being regularly paid. The wages are small—from three to four dollars per month, in addition to their food. They are allowed to draw a third of their pay on the last Saturday of every month, and full settlement is made twice a year. They are supplied with clothing and other necessaries, out of which the agent makes a per centage, and which is charged against their wages.

There is one admirable regulation of the Chilian government, that of not permitting liquors to be brought within a league of any mine, under a severe penalty, which is strictly enforced. The cost of the maintenance of each workman is not great; they are allowed as rations for breakfast four handfuls of dried figs, and the same of walnuts: value about three cents. For dinner they have bread, and fresh beef or pork. Small stores, as sugar and tea, they find themselves. One of the greatest inconveniences, and which is attended with some expense, is the supply of the miners with water, which has to be brought up the mountains.

The miners' huts are the last dwellings on the Chilian side of the Andes. Mr. Alderson mentioned, that in five hours' ride from thence, a lake was reported to exist, three leagues in circumference, on the summit of a conical mountain, which is surrounded by a beach of sand and gravel, and has no outlet. Several persons confirmed this statement as to the existence of the lake, that it had no visible outlet, and that the water was always at the same level. Although desirous of visiting so interesting a spot, they found they had not time left to accomplish it. They therefore determined, instead, to make a visit to the coal-mine which was reported as existing about two leagues farther on the Cordilleras. They reached this in about three hours. Leaving their mules, they scrambled up the face of a cliff for some two hundred feet, where some fragments of coal, more, however, resembling lignite, and retaining perfectly the structure of the original wood, were found.