

**COAL CATECHISM,
PP. 1-235**

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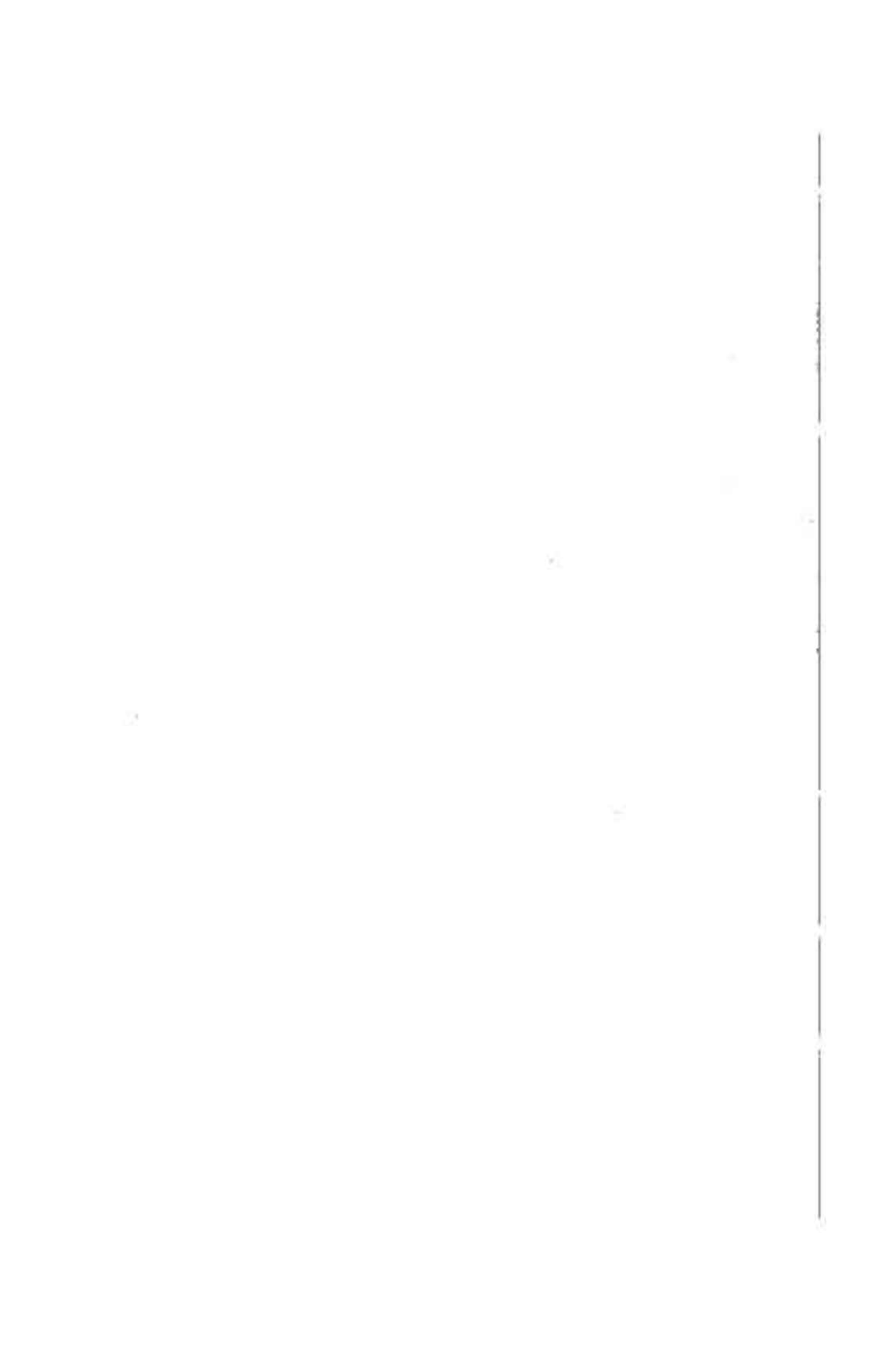
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"It was only the other day, so to speak, that Nature turned a creature out of her workshop, who by degrees acquired sufficient wits to make a fire, and then to discover that the black rock would burn."—PROFESSOR HUXLEY



PREFACE

CATECHISM of Coal is intended for that great number of intelligent readers who have no technical training, and yet who prefer to seek knowledge by reading special subjects rather than fiction. A large proportion of these have neither the time nor the inclination to peruse the voluminous geological and statistical reports of the coal industry in the United States, or to study the ponderous volumes of gathered wisdom by technical experts. Their time is usually fully occupied with the cares of business and often with the fatigue of manual labor, and their hours for quiet reading or study are few and most precious. For these, the following plain questions and direct authoritative answers have been designed with a realizing sense of the readers' wants and aspirations. The task conscientiously assumed by the writer has been to verify all the answers by referring to competent authorities. The great number of these consulted renders it

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impossible to credit each one, as the result would be confusing and, in fact, impracticable, since the consensus of opinions is given and rarely that of an individual. It is assumed that the reader knows theoretically nothing about Coal, and the questions are so arranged as to lead him gradually through the various stages of its origin, development, and uses until a full knowledge of the subject has been obtained. In justification of the catechetical form used the writer refers to the old educational catechisms used by our forefathers in many of the best universities of Europe. No better manner has since been devised for imparting a thorough knowledge of a subject, especially to those young students in our schools and colleges who desire special instruction, or to those who, from want of opportunity or otherwise, have not received the necessary training for systematic study or reading.

The writer needs no apology for his subject; its importance can scarcely be overestimated. Coal is the basis of all energy and power, the prime mover of the wheels of industry. With Coal, we have light, strength;

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power, wealth, and civilization; without Coal, we have darkness, weakness, poverty, and barbarism. The most civilized nations of the world are those consuming the most Coal. At the head of these stands the United States.

W. J. N.

PHILADELPHIA, 1906.