

DISCOUNTED THE NOTES

AND THEREBY B. S. RUSSELL,
OF JAMESTOWN HELPED TO
BUILD THE MONITOR.

During the recent session of the American Mining congress in Deadwood, S. D., there visited in Lead and the Black Hills a man, who indirectly influenced the turning of a critical point in the civil war and had a hand in revolutionizing the methods of modern naval warfare, says the Lead City Daily Call. He was Benjamin S. Russell, of Jamestown, N. D., a delegate appointed to the congress by Governor White of that state, and the father of S. W. Russell, of Deadwood.

Between the years of 1860 and 1865 Mr. Russell was a resident of Towand, Pa., engaged at the time in the banking business and interested in the Barclay coal mines, situated about sixteen miles from his home town. The product of the mines was a semi-bituminous coal remarkably free from sulphur and much sought at that time by manufacturers of iron plate.

The Barclay company was then in the hands of an assignee, James Macfarlane, who conducted its affairs and endeavored under adverse conditions to keep the mines in operation. In the fall of 1861 Macfarlane called upon Mr. Russell and informed him that he had received an offer for six canal boat loads of coal from Corning Winslow & Co., of Troy, N. Y. He further stated that the latter company had contracted with the federal government to build an iron clad war vessel, and that in the manufacture of the necessary plate they desired to use the coal of the Barclay people, but were unable to gather together the necessary cash. The Troy people proposed to Mr. Macfarlane that he accept for the coal the notes of their company, payable six months from date of issue. Macfarlane hesitated in accepting but agreed to undertake the delivery of the coal if Mr. Russell would discount the notes. Being interested financially in the company and anxious to promote the affairs of the Barclay mines Mr. Russell acquiesced in the proposal and the coal was in due time delivered to Corning, Winslow & Co., at Troy.

The coal was used in the manufacture of the armor plate for the little ironclad Monitor, designed by the immortal Ericson, that subsequently drove from the seas the confederate monster, Merrimac, stemmed the tide of southern naval victories and helped in a marked degree to establish the supremacy of the union cause.