

The Mining Journal

5th February 1848

Page 60 Col. 3

Accidents.

Blower's Green Colliery, Dudley – J. Vickers was killed by a fall of a quantity of coal.

Rose Bridge Colliery, Wigan – On Thursday week, a portion of the roof of this colliery fell in, and buried two youths about 15 years of age, one of whom, when the rubbish had been cleared, was found to be quite dead, and the other so seriously injured, that but faint hopes are entertained of his recovery.

Cwmavon Works – On Thursday week a poor man, name Rees Jones, was killed at these works, in consequence of having fallen into a coal-pit, about 100 yards deep.

Fatal Accident – As many of the Penydarran workpeople were coming in the trams, on Friday evening, the 28th ult., from the top of the incline to the yard, the chain, owing to the severe frost having made it brittle, broke, and the parties were precipitated in all directions. William Foster, a married man, with two children, and his wife, an invalid with rheumatism, and on the eve of her confinement, was killed on the spot, and many others were severely injured. – Swansea Herald.

A Young Woman Killed by Falling down a Coal Pit – An inquest was held on Tuesday, the 25th Jan, on the body of a woman named Elizabeth Wootton, at the Royal Oak public house, Portobello. It appeared, that the deceased, on the previous day, was working for her father, who is a butty collier, at the Bull Pleck Coal Pit, and when engaged, in company with another girl, in pushing off the skip, she overbalanced herself, and was precipitated to the bottom of the shaft, and dashed to pieces. The poor girl, in the act of falling, laid hold of her companion's dress, in order to save herself, and the latter was obliged to shake her off for her own preservation, otherwise she would have shared a similar horrible fate. These accidents, so frightful to contemplate, are of common occurrence in the mining districts; but the greater portion arises from the wilful neglect to secure the openings of the worked-out pits. – Birmingham Journal.

Wheal Tremayne – An inquest was held, on Friday week, at Crowan, on Wm. Lean, a whim lander at Wheal Tremayne, Gwinear. On the 20th ult., while adjusting the whim-chain, prior to working the whim, the weight of the kibble, suspended to the chain, caused the slack of the latter to run suddenly into the shaft, giving the deceased a blow on his head, and fracturing his skull, from the effects of which he died.

West Bromwich – W. Griffin was killed by a fall of coal at Messrs. Bagnall's colliery. J. Sheldon was also killed by a fall of coal, while working in one of Messrs. Halford's pits.

On Friday, the 28th January, a fatal accident befell a man named Samuel Launt, of Bolehill, near Wirksworth, aged 35 years. He was descending a mine, when a stone fell down the shaft after him, struck him on the head, and caused his death in a short time. The miners' jury, called the "twenty-four," sat over his body on Monday last, and returned a verdict of accidental death. – Derby Reporter.

An accident happened at Hady ironstone pits, on Monday last, to a man named Longden. Whilst he was working at the bottom, a quantity of bind fell upon him, and injured him severely on the head and other parts of his body.

On the following day, an accident happened at the same pits to Joseph Ward, of Brampton. It appears that he was working at the bottom of a shaft at the time when a corf was being drawn up; the corf was safely landed at the top, but the horse at the gin unfortunately backed too soon, and it was overturned; the ironstone was thrown down the shaft, and a portion of it fell upon Ward, breaking his leg, and otherwise injuring him. – Ibid.

Tipton – Thomas Rowley, aged 10 years, went down one of the pits belonging to Messrs. Haines, taking a lighted candle into the works before the safety-lamp had been applied- the consequence was, that an explosion occurred, and deceased was so dreadfully burnt that he was compelled to be conveyed home, where he lingered until Monday week, when he expired. It appeared that the explosion originated from the want of proper caution on the part of deceased.

Staveley Works – George Walker, had ascended the shaft with a fellow workman, when, in attempting to get out of the corf, his foot slipped, and he fell to the bottom of the pit, a distance of upwards of 30 yards, and was killed on the spot.

The Mining Journal

5th February 1848

Page 60 Col. 3

Fourdrinier's Apparatus for Preventing Accidents in Mines.

We are glad to hear that the patentees of this ingenious and useful invention have met with considerable success in their endeavours to introduce it in the north; we are informed, that they have arranged with three of the largest proprietors, each to take one on trial; and, on exhibiting the model, at the Central Exchange, Newcastle-on-Tyne, on Saturday last, the utmost satisfaction was expressed by all who witnessed it.

The Mining Journal

5th February 1848

Page 60 Col. 3

The Oaks Colliery Explosion.

Our readers will no doubt remember that a dreadful explosion took place at Oaks Colliery, on the 5th of March last, when 73 persons unfortunately lost their lives. At that time a subscription was opened for the purpose of alleviating the distress of the widows, orphans, and friends of the deceased. A meeting of the contributors, and recipients of the fund, was recently held in the Court House, Barnsley, for the purpose of auditing the accounts, and laying a statement before the meeting: 34 widows and 57 orphans were present, and their appearance was very creditable, and excited much sympathy. They were provided with an excellent dinner, during which the ladies present acted as waiters and nurses to the children. By the account of the funds, it appears that the subscriptions amount to £2010, of which £1982-14-9d have been collected. The disbursements are, to the objects of the charity, £375-1-2d; for stationery, printing, and lithographing, £9-17-0d; investment with the Midland Railway Company on debenture, bearing interest at 5 per cent, £1200 – balance in hand of Barnsley Banking Company, £397-11-7d.

The Mining Journal

5th February 1848

Page 60 Col. 3

The Inundated Coal Mines.

The progress of pumping is going on satisfactorily, and many of the proprietors are making preparations to commence working their upper mines. At the Patricroft Colliery they have reduced the water to within about 2 yards of the "four feet mine."

The Mining Journal

5th February 1848

Page 62 Col. 2

Sheffield and Its Supplies of Coal.

The Price of coal in Sheffield and the neighbourhood varies, according to the quality, from 2-6d a ton, the lowest, to 7-0d a ton, the highest price, at the pit's mouth. The two most valuable beds of the Yorkshire coalfield are, one which lies about the middle of the series, and about 300 yards below the topmost workable seam. This bed is called, according to the different places at which it is worked, or its owner, the Barnsley Thickbed, the Gauber Hall, the Worsborough, the Elsecar, Lord FitzWilliam's, Lorby's, Frances, the Darnall, the Handsworth, and the Reighton coal; this is a remarkable pure hot coal, and free from earthy particles, and is on that account the best coal for converting iron into steel, in which process it is requisite to preserve both a high and an even temperature, and this coal, making little or no deposit on the bars, does not interrupt the even course of the draught; for the same reason it is the best coal for making coke for railway engines, as any deposit on the bars causes them to burn and wear out. This coal may be called the "converting coal." It is, however, only the pit pieces of this which are used for converting coal, the broken and smaller parts being sold at a lower price for engine coal. The other bed is the Silkstone, the Sheffield bed, Newbold's, the Intake, and the Unstone Bed, all of which are precisely the same coal. This bed lies about 300 yards below the foregoing, and is the lowest of the Yorkshire workable seams. It does not make so good railway coke as the other, being less for this purpose by 2-0d per ton; it is most used in Sheffield for manufacturing purposes, for melting steel, for smiths' use, and for house-fire coal. This may be called the "meltings coal;" it is cheaper than the other at Sheffield, and has been sold for a considerable time at the price of 8-0d per ton, delivered at the consumer's door. This is the coal which is brought up to the pit mouth in the town of Sheffield. The price of the "converting coal" increased in May 1844, from 8-0d to 9-3d a ton, delivered at the consumer's door, so that the demand exceeded the supply. This is the coal of which, more than any other, Sheffield wants an increased supply, and of this very coal there is abundance along the line of the Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway, which can thereby be brought into Sheffield at a low price.

The Mining Journal

5th February 1848

Page 62 Col. 2

Dowlais.

The average of coal used at the Dowlais Ironworks, is estimated at 1500 tons per day.

Accidents.

Awful Colliery Explosion – Another of those frightfully sudden catastrophes, which are unfortunately of such frequent occurrence in our coal mining districts, took place on Wednesday last, about 6 o'clock a.m., at the Heathfield Colliery, Messrs. Salter and Raybould lessees. The details of which are as follows, and which are believed to be accurate we extract from the Birmingham Advertiser: - "At the hour named, seven men, who had been working in the mine during the night, were replaced by 29 others, but soon after this relay of day-men had descended, an explosion of carburetted hydrogen took place- the vapour arising from which blazed out of the mouth of the pit above the frame-work, and occasioned a shock that was felt throughout the neighbourhood. Six or seven of the men succeeded in making their escape through the gate-way leading into the Lewisham Pits, where they safely ascended the shaft, and were landed from the skip, and enabled to communicate, at Messrs. Salter and Raybould's office, the dangerous position in which those were placed who were left behind. It was then ascertained at the Heathfield Colliery, that the force of the explosion had snapped the rope to which the skip was attached, within 50 yards of the mouth of the pit, on returning from taking down the last load of men. After some delay caused by this circumstance, the roads were explored, and the mangled corpses of three colliers were brought up, followed by 12 others, many of whom presented a most frightful appearance from the injuries they had received about the head, neck, breast, and hands; particularly the latter, attributable, it is supposed, to the efforts made by the men to free themselves from their clothing: 13 other colliers escaped without sustaining injury of any kind. Five horses were also reported to be killed. Of the 12 who escaped with their lives from the consequences of the explosion, two are so dangerously burnt that they are not at all likely to recover; one has also a scalp wound occasioned by some of the coal disturbed in the explosion falling upon him, and the other an extensive contused wound on the leg, arising from the same cause. The men are under the care of Dr. Dickinson, of the Terrace. At five o'clock yesterday afternoon there was still one man missing, and it was expected that he would be found buried beneath the masses of coal that are invariably displaced from the lodgements in the mine by occurrences of this kind. The explosion is variously accounted for. By some it is attributed to atmospheric causes. The lessees of the colliery contend that they had previously no reason to apprehend any danger from an accumulation of firedamp; although, we believe, that the immediate cause of the catastrophe was, that Charles Hortin, the man not yet discovered, held a lighted candle too near some portion of (what the result proves was) inflammable matter. We were told, however, a fact of great importance – namely, that there was neither any safety-lamp in the pit, nor had the pit been tried by the doggy, as was both customary and necessary prior to the day-men descending to their work. The three men who were killed were conveyed to their homes; and G. Hinchcliffe, Esq., coroner, has appointed Friday as the day on which a judicial investigation will be made into the circumstances attendant on their deaths. The inquest will be held at the Dartmouth Hotel. The names of the deceased men are – John Lowe, Robert Harper, and Henry Broadway. The latter was a married man. The names of the other sufferers are – John Casetty, Richard Bullock, William Noak, Walter White, George Bird, J. Taylor, William Johnson, James Shudely, John Grice. Joseph Harford, Absalom Sleater, and P. Taylor. The last two named are the persons whose lives are despaired of. Prior to the inquest, we understand that some scientific men will be engaged in a minute examination of the pit, under the authority of the coroner. It may be necessary to state that, although the pit is the property of the Earl of Dartmouth, he has no connection with the working of it; and that, on intelligence of the explosion reaching his lordship at Sandwell Hall, he manifested that sympathy and kindness

which invariably characterise the conduct of the noble earl. Heathfield Colliery is the same in respect of which Mr. Caddick, solicitor, obtained an injunction, some time since; and also from which a charge originated against the lessees – Messrs. Salter and Raybould, of stealing the mine (see Mining Journal, January 29). This charge was originally fixed to be heard at the next Stafford Assizes; but a rule nisi having been obtained upon application of a writ of certiorari to remove the trial to the Court of Queen's Bench, negotiations have taken place, which are likely to lead to some amicable arrangement being effected between the parties. Notwithstanding the continuance of a very bleak wind, and heavy fall of rain, the news of the above occurrence attracted a large concourse of spectators to the spot, and the embankments of the pit were crowded during the day by persons, many of whom were drawn thither by rumours of the most exaggerated description. Since the above was received, we understand that 3 out of the 12 injured men are dead, leaving wives and numerous children; their names are A. Sleater, J. Casetty, and R. Bullock; two others, it is expected, cannot survive. The body of Charles Horton, the man who first fixed up his lighted candle against the coal, and caused the explosion of the hydrogen gas, was not discovered until eight o'clock last evening, having been buried beneath an enormous mass of coal, which had fallen at the time the gas ignited. His body, when found, presented a frightful appearance, being crushed to pieces – so much so, that it was with great difficulty removed to where he formerly resided. The exact cause of the melancholy affair has not yet transpired, nor will it until the inquest, which takes place tomorrow, before G. Hinchcliffe, Esq., is held. The accumulation of firedamp was, no doubt, caused by the roughness of the weather during the last few days. We are sorry to say another explosion, though not attended with any fatal result, took place in a pit situated on the moors, about a quarter of a mile from the Heathfield Colliery. Two men were severely burned, and one had his thigh broken.

Wheal Franco – As J. Hodges, having finished his work, was ascending the shaft, he accidentally slipped, and fell to the bottom, a depth of 120 feet.

Top Patricroft Colliery, Wigan – A miner, named Rowe, had a very providential escape from a shocking death on Thursday last; he had just hooked on a basket of coals, which was in its progress up the shaft, when he happened to look up, and perceiving a large "cob," which had slipped from the basket, falling down. Rowe attempted to run under the hollows, but, in doing so, the coal caught him on the hip, which it mutilated in a shocking manner. At first but faint hopes were entertained of his recovery – now, we are happy to say, he is doing well.

Millfields, near Bilston – As C. Robins, 10 years of age, was playing on the pit bank, belonging to Mr. Ryley, he fell down the shaft, and was killed.

Buckley, near Mold – An awful accident occurred in this colliery on Tuesday week; as two of the men were at work, the roof fell in, and killed them on the spot; they were so firmly imbedded in the rubbish, that blasting was necessary before the bodies could be got. In the same mine, on the same day, a man was killed by an explosion of firedamp.

White Lee, near Crook – John Grey was unfortunately crushed to death by a tub, in Mr. Pease's West Colliery.

Walsall – J. Ramsall was killed by falling from a scaffold, which had been erected to enable him to put a bucket in the pump, in a pit belonging to Mr. Joseph Smith, at Bloxwich. W. Vaughan, the engine-man, was assisting deceased at the time, and also fell from the scaffold, but fortunately caught hold of a projecting part, and was saved.

Wednesbury – On Thursday night, the 3rd inst., between 11 and 12, E. Cornwall was at work in Mr. Baylis's colliery (where also two other men and a boy were employed), and whilst cutting into an old hollow, excavated some years ago, a quantity of dirt fell upon him, and before he could be

extricated, he was suffocated by the foul air. – J. Rose fell down one of Mr. Walker's pits, and was killed.

Somercotes, near Alfreton – As J. Bridget, aged 72, was working in a colliery here, a piece of coal fell upon his body, crushing him so severely, that he expired in a few hours.

Staveley Netherthorpe – As W. Johnson was working at the bottom of a shaft, the chair used for drawing up the coals was let down too low, and it struck him with such violence on the head, that but slight hopes are entertained of his recovery. – On the following morning (Wednesday), as I. Ball was working in the same pit, a quantity of bind fell upon him, and injured him very severely.

A similar accident happened on Thursday, at Hady Ironstone Pits, to a young man of the name of Wright, whose father resides in Castle Yard, Chesterfield. – Derby Reporter.

Burnley, near Blackburn – J. Holland was killed in a mine at Ighten Hill Park; he was standing on the second landing of the shaft, when he missed his footing – was knocked over, and fell to the bottom of the shaft, about 21 fathoms.

Newfield Colliery – M. Flynn was killed by a large mass of ironstone falling upon him.

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 81 Col. 1

Advert: Stannaries of Cornwall – In the Vice-Warden's Court.

Hill v. Vigers.

In Re Polberou, otherwise Saint Agnes Consolidated Mines.

Notice is hereby given, that the Sale of the Engines, Mining Machinery, Materials, and Other effects, upon and belonging to the Royal Polberou Mines, otherwise the Saint Agnes Consolidated Mines, in the Parish of Saint Agnes, within the said Stannaries, advertised to be held on the 15th day of February inst.,

Is Postponed until the Fourteenth Day of March next.

Hodge and Hockin, Solicitors, Truro,
For Grylls and Hill, Solicitors, Helston.

Dated Registrar's Office, Truro, Feb. 8, 1848.

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 81 Col. 1

Advert: To Ironmasters, Tin-Plate Makers, Iron-Founders, Boiler-Plate Makers, &c.

A most desirable Investment in Trade to be Sold, by Auction, by Mr. George T. Stroud, on Tuesday, the 29th day of February, 1848, at the Castle Inn, in the town of Swansea.

Sale to commence at Two o'clock in the afternoon precisely.

All that newly-erected Tin-Plate Works, now in complete order for working – consisting of Two New Steam-Engines, Rolling-Mills, Furnaces, Storing-Rooms, Offices, and Yards – forming most Compact Works for any of the above branches of manufacture – standing on about six acres of land in all, adjoining the River Dafen, with a railway from the works direct to the port of Llanelly, which is distant from two miles.

The premises are held under a lease, for 99 years, at the low ground-rent of £30 a year, with power for the lessees to purchase the freehold, at a moderate price, at any time within 10 years from 1846.

For further particulars (or a view of the premises), apply to Mr. B. Jones, solicitor, Llanelly; or to Mr. George t. Stroud, auctioneer.

N.B. – The larger engine has a 40 inch condensing cylinder, 7 feet stroke – is about 80 horse-power, and has three 20 feet boilers, 6 feet diameter each. The smaller engine is a 13 inch high-pressure, with a 38 feet blast cylinder, &c. There are attached to the large engine two sets of black plate rolls, shears, &c.; one pair of cold rolls, one pair of bar-iron rolls and shears, &c.

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 81 Col. 1

Advert: Ironstone and Coal Mines, within Duckmanton

-also, Steam-Engines, Blowing Apparatus, &c., &c., at the Adelphi Ironworks, Duckmanton, aforesaid, near Chesterfield, in the county of Derby.

To Be Sold, by Auction, by Mr. Nicholson, under powers of sale, contained in a mortgage deed, at the house of Mrs. Evinson, the Angel Inn, Chesterfield, on Tuesday, the 29th day of February, 1848, at Three o'clock in the afternoon, for Four precisely, subject to such conditions as shall be then produced, the unexpired Term of a Lease, for 20 years, from the 25th of March, 1831, of an in certain Ironstone and Coal Mines, and divers Messuages, Closes, Lands, and Premises, containing 108 acres, 3 acres 12 perches, or thereabouts, in the parish of Sutton-cum-Duckmanton, in the county of Derby. Also the following necessary articles for carrying on two blast-furnaces and an extensive colliery – viz.:

At the Iron-Works.

Two Steam-Engines, of 50 horse-power each, blowing apparatus, complete, filling gear for two furnaces, cast-iron receiver, three single and one double heating apparatus. One 45 horse Pumping-Engine, with 200 yards of pump-trees, working barrels, ironworks and runners to two blast-furnaces, and working apparatus to the same.

Cranes, Cupolas, Fixtures in Moulding Shops, one new Railroad, wrought-iron (1000 yards long), on wood and stone sleepers.

One cast-iron railroad (2000 yards long), two steam-engines, level and pumping engine, ropes, gearing, &c.

At the Colliery.

Steam-Engine and Boiler, winding apparatus, pump apparatus, with pumps, pump trees, with all the usual and necessary appendages, and iron tubing in the pits.

To view the premises, apply to Wm. Brookes, at the Iron-works; and Wm. Moore, at the colliery; and for further particulars, application may be made at the offices of Messrs. Lucas and Cutts, solicitors, Chesterfield.

Feb. 16, 1848

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 81 Col. 1

Advert: Dean Forest, Gloucestershire.

Important and Valuable Coal-Fields, in extent about Six Hundred Acres, for Absolute Sale.

Mr. William Graham is instructed by the proprietor to Sell by Auction, at the Bell Hotel, Gloucester, on Saturday, the 4th day of March, 1848, at Three o'clock in the afternoon, subject to conditions of sale, those extensive and Valuable Coal-Fields, Known as the Britannia and the Favourite Collieries.

Lot 1. The Britannia: Is galed to the Coleford High Delf Vein of Coal, and all veins above it.

Lot 2. The Favourite: Is also galed to the Coleford High Delf Vein of Coal, and all veins between it and the Churchway High Delf Vein.

These collieries adjoin each other, and contain about Six Hundred Acres of Coal,

And will be sold, together or separately, as may be agreed on at the time of sale.

The Severn and Wye Railway intersects a portion of the Favourite Colliery, and joins the locomotive branches of the South Wales, and Monmouth and Hereford Railways (for which an Act is obtained), a short distance to the east of them. They are very well situated, at Brierly, equidistant between Coleford and Micheldean – surrounded by some of the best collieries in the Forest, and are in such an advantageous position, that both may be thoroughly worked with the same establishment.

Particulars and conditions of sale may be had at the principal inns in the adjacent towns; the place of sale; of J.R.N. Norton, Esq., and Messrs. Powles, Tyler, and Powles, solicitors, Monmouth; C.G.H. St. Patrick, Esq., solicitor, Worcester; the auctioneer, Blue Broom, Ragland and Newport; and for a view of a map of the Forest, and the plan of the collieries, apply to John Atkinson, Esq., Coleford, her Majesty's Gaveller for the Forest of Dean; or to the proprietor,

Mr. William Court, Auctioneer and General Valuer, Monmouth.

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 81 Col. 2

Advert: Banwen Iron Company.

Notice is hereby given, that the next ordinary General Meeting of the shareholders of this company will be held at their offices, 23, Threadneedle Street, London, on Monday, the 28th inst., at Twelve o'clock precisely.

23, Threadneedle Street, Feb. 16, 1848

By Order, S.P. Harris, Secretary.

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 81 Col. 2

Advert: British Mining Offices.

Notice – The Business of these Offices will henceforth be Conducted at No. 25, Fleet Street, London, and No. 4, Stamp Office Buildings, Manchester, to either of which offices communications are requested to be addressed. The correspondence and reports, with the accounts, of the respective companies may be inspected at all times, on application.

British Mining Offices, Feb. 17, 1848

William Shearman

James Truscott

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 81 Col. 2

Advert: Carthew Consols Mining Company.

At a Special General Meeting of Adventurers, in the Carthew Consols Mining Company, held at the British Mining Offices, 4 Stamp Office Buildings, Manchester, on Friday, the 11th February inst., pursuant to circular.

Joseph Smith, Esq., in the Chair.

The objects for which the meeting was convened having been conveyed by the chairman, the following resolutions were submitted seriatim, and carried unanimously: -

That the rules and regulations be adopted and entered in the Cost-Book, and that the same be signed and admitted by the respective adventurers.

That Mr. W. Shearman be appointed as purser.

That Capt. H.F. Stephens be appointed as cashier and chief superintendent.

That Mr. James Gray be appointed as agent and engineer.

That Mr. W.H. Gray be appointed as storekeeper – that he be required to furnish, monthly, an abstract of the stock account.

That the management of the affairs of the mine be henceforth conducted at the British Mining Offices, and that the sum of 12 guineas per month be paid for the same – such sum to include all charges for rent and stationery, services of manager, purser, consulting engineer, clerks, &c., except any payment made for stamps or carriage, or such as may be allowed by the finance committee.

That no transfer fees shall be charged, and that the form of transfer laid on the table be approved.

That a finance committee be appointed, in accordance with the sixth resolution, passed this day; and that the financial management of the affairs of the mine be conducted in Manchester – that the sum of five guineas per month be allowed for the services of the committee, and that the same be charged in the monthly cost sheet.

That Mr. John Fry be appointed as the doctor, or surgeon, of the mine – whose services be paid for in the ordinary manner.

On the resolution of the chairman – moved and seconded –

That the thanks of the meeting be given to Mr. Henry English, for the services rendered by that gentleman – such motion was carried unanimously.

Joseph Smith, Chairman.

Moved by Mr. Truscott; seconded by Mr. Rawson, -

That the cordial thanks of the adventurers be, and are hereby, given to the chairman, for his urbane and gentlemanly conduct in the chair this day.

Carried unanimously.

W. Shearman, Purser.

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 81 Col. 2

Advert: Tincroft Mining Company.

At a General Meeting of Adventurers, held at the offices of the company, 44, Finsbury Square, on Thursday, the 17th inst.,

Resolved, - That the Reports and Accounts, now submitted, be received, adopted, and entered on the minutes; and that, for the future, there be appended to the usual quarterly statement of accounts a supplementary account, showing, up to the most recent period practicable, the cost and returns of the mine, and a statement of the ores on surface, so far as ascertained. Carried unanimously.

Resolved, - That the thanks of the shareholders be presented to the chairman and directors, for their able and judicious management of the affairs of this company. Carried unanimously.

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 85 Col. 1

Accidents.

The Heathfield Colliery Explosion – In last week's Journal, we gave an account of an explosion at this colliery, by which six unfortunate workmen lost their lives, and several others were seriously injured. The inquest on the bodies was held yesterday week, at the Dartmouth Hotel, West Bromwich; and, from the evidence adduced, much mystery prevails as to the cause of the explosion. The pit appears to have been thoroughly ventilated; there has never been any collection of carburetted hydrogen since the commencement of the works; and one man was in the side of work, with a naked candle, at four o'clock in the morning, two hours before the accident, when all appeared perfectly safe. In October last, an injunction was served on the lessees, in consequence of which the works were stopped full six weeks, when the air was completely shut out; notwithstanding which, on reopening the pit, the whole was found perfectly free from gas, and a good current of air passing. The only conclusion that can at present be come to, is that a sudden fall of a portion of the barrier from the old workings allowing an instantaneous escape of a large quantity of the inflammable vapour. The inquest stands adjourned, and, probably, more light will be thrown on it when some of the injured men are able to give evidence.

Brierley Hill – A poor boy, employed at the Park Colliery, while endeavouring to turn off the skip which he had just unloaded, was suddenly jerked from his feet by the rope attached to the skip, with which he descended the shaft of the pit, and was dashed to pieces.

Maesteg Ironworks – While D. Griffiths, of Newcastle Emlyn, was employed digging in a place called the Kirdin Patch, a stone fell from the top upon his head, and bruised it so that his brains fell out into his hat. He was carried to his lodgings, and medical assistance was procured, but all in vain, for he expired in a short time afterwards.

Pontypool – John Kayes met with a severe accident, by incautiously venturing into an old working, in a pit at Cwm-nant-Ddu, belonging to Mr. Ebenezer Morgan. Kayes has always been a very steady man, and frequently took occasion to caution his fellow workmen against venturing into similar places to that in which he received the injury, which is likely to prove fatal.

Dudley – Old Park Colliery – G. Wilkes, being in search of wood, and an empty skip having been brought to the mouth of one of the pits, to be let down on a loaded one coming up, the unfortunate lad, it appears, thought the skip was not near enough to the pit's mouth, and, pushing it further, he was precipitated to the bottom of the shaft, a depth of 30 yards, together with the empty skip. He was immediately got out, and found to be quite dead.

St. Helen's – An explosion of firedamp took place at Messrs. Johnson, Worthington, and Co.'s, Sankey Brook Colliery, Parr. In consequence of the decay of some old workings, a volume of foul air was suddenly admitted into the new workings, where coal was being got; and being ignited by an unprotected candle, a fearful explosion took place. There were 54 persons in the mine at the time, but all escaped with safety except seven; three are now dead, and four others are lingering under severe injuries, without any hope of recovery. – Liverpool Mercury, yesterday.

New Field Colliery, Wolverhampton – L. Dando was killed by an explosion of firedamp.

Pyle, Glamorganshire – W. Harts was killed by a fall of coal, at Messrs. Ford and Son's.

The Late Fatal Boiler Explosion at Manchester – Verdict of Manslaughter against the Owner – The inquest arising out of the fatal boiler explosion at Manchester on Friday last, was adjourned from Saturday to Wednesday afternoon. There were nine dead when the jury was summoned on Saturday, but since that time three others have been added to the victims already mentioned. The evidence adduced was of a very voluminous character, and tended to show that the boiler was unsafe; and that Mr. Riley, the owner, had been frequently warned of that fact. After hearing all the evidence, the jury unanimously returned a verdict of "manslaughter" against Mr. Riley.

The Mining Journal

19th February 1848

Page 85 Col. 1

Prevention of Accidents in Coal Mines.

We have much pleasure in copying the following paragraph from the Staffordshire Mercury, as corroborative of the opinion we have on several occasions expressed, of the importance of Mr. Fourdrinier's invention, and its certainty of preventing accidents from the breakage of ropes, &c., in collieries: - Mr. Edward N. Fourdrinier, of Cheddleton Mill, has just brought it before the attention of the colliery owners of this district, a very simple and ingenious, but most important contrivance, which cannot but be hailed as an invaluable boon by all who are engaged in mining operations. The object of the invention is to prevent the many appalling accidents which are constantly resulting from the breakage of the chain or ropes, and drawing the skip over the pulley, or the whirl, or run. The Apparatus is now in daily use at one of Mr. Sneyd's pits, at the Sneyd Green Colliery, between Hanley and Burslem. On Wednesday last, Fereday Smith, Esq., of the mining department of the Earl of Ellesmere, and W. Pearce, Esq., of the same department of the Earl of Belcarras, attended for the purpose of inspecting the operations of this valuable invention, and were highly satisfied with the result. We have had the pleasure of witnessing several of the experiments, all of which were attended with complete success. In one instance the merit of the invention was fully tested by the chain being unintentionally drawn over the pulley; no disastrous consequences, however, resulted, the skip or rather cage being detached from the chain, and remaining safe on the guides. A heavy load was subsequently lowered about 40 yards down the pit, and the chain cut at about 20 yards above the surface, by which means no less than 60 yards of chain fell down the shaft. A man, having been let down by a rope to ascertain the result, found the machine perfectly secured, and the chain safely coiled on the top of the cage in which the man ascends and descends. The man immediately attached the rope to the chain, which, having been drawn up and repaired, was again let down and fastened to the apparatus. The whole was then safely drawn up, with the man in the skip, the experiment having occupied no more than 20 min, and no injury whatever having been sustained either by the machine or the guides. There can be but one opinion as to the great advantages to be derived from the general adoption of this invaluable invention, and it is to be sincerely hoped that no time will be lost in making this arrangement for the more effectual preservation of human life."

The Mining Journal

26th February 1848

Page 101 Col. 1

Sarawak (Borneo).

So much interest has been excited as regards this territory, or colony, forming a part of the Island of Borneo, that we have made some minute inquiries as to the nature of the soil, its advantages in point of position, as laid down in the charts, and its mineral and other resources. We have to express our obligations to Mr. Hiram Williams, who was employed, on the part of Government, in making a survey, and reporting thereon; while the information which we are enabled to afford, is not only original, but supported by the evidence and personal observation of his Highness the Rajah Brooke, of Sarawak, who also fills the office of Governor of Labuan. Ere entering on the advantages presented by Sarawak to the capitalist, or settler, we may make some passing observations on Labuan, which lies about 330 miles, or 28 hours' voyage, north of the former. By the latest advices received, under date 20th Dec., which came by the honourable company's steamer, the *Phlegethon*, we find, that operations were still active in working the seam of coal at the north-east point of the island, nearly 400 tons having been raised and stored. The crew of the vessel has, it appears, been actively employed in constructing jetties, at several points, in Victoria Bay, and in erecting buildings for storing the coal. The advantages of Labuan, as a coal depot for our steamers, situate, as it is, between Singapore and the Manillas, and in a line with the China Seas, may well be appreciated. It is proposed, on the arrival of the Governor, to proceed with the colonisation of the island. Having thus briefly noticed the seat of the British Government, we at once proceed to render such information as we have acquired respecting Sarawak, which, from the representations made, promises to become an important field for mining and agricultural productions.

Sarawak, it is hardly necessary to say, is in the Isle of Borneo, with two rivers, which approach it in a north-west and north-easterly direction; the river is navigable for vessels of 700 to 800 tons burthen – her Majesty's ships *Dido* and *Samarang* having anchored close off the town. The tide is stated to rise and fall 18ft; and as there is a depth of 5fms at low water, it is almost needless to state, that vessels are, at all times, afloat. The town of Sarawak is on the banks of the river of that name, containing about 12,000 inhabitants, and is about 540 miles, or 45 hours' voyage, from Singapore, in a north-easterly direction, and 330 miles, or 28 hours' passage, from Labuan, the seat of the British Government, which is immediately north, the latter point being within 23 miles of Bruni, the population of which is full 20,000; from this point to the Manillas, in the China Seas, is a distance computed at 690 miles, or 58 hours. The extent of the territory may be assumed at about 200 miles east and west, by 100 miles north and south. A grant of land has been secured, in the first instance, by Mr. Hiram Williams from the Rajah, extending over 2,000 acres, which is conveyed by deed, under date the 29th Jan, with power of extension, and is situate immediately south of the town of Sarawak, being admirably placed as regards wharfage; while an option has been granted, of the right to secure the whole river frontage, on the south side, from the fort to Lintang – a distance of 5½ miles.

In the grant so acquired, in addition to the commercial advantages presented by the locale, land has been secured for the erection of buildings and manufactories, as well as the right of searching for, and extracting gold dust, which is found in considerable quantities throughout the district, more especially the western and southern valleys, or base of the mountain tracts.

Before proceeding to remark on the mineralogical formation, or produce, we may note that the cost of clearing the land, so far as we can ascertain, is from \$20 to \$30 per acre, according to

the quantity of wood and jungle required to be removed – these being the current prices paid for similar work at the present moment. Labour is stated to be both plentiful and cheap – the pay of a man being \$3½ to \$4 per month. The quality of the vegetable produce, or that arising from the cultivation of the soil, is represented as being very superior, and holding out advantages as to production not often met with. Sugar, cotton, coffee of the Mocha character, sago, nutmegs, cocoa-nuts, vegetable tallow, arrow-root, pepper (black and Cayenne), rice, ginger, and a variety of other spices, are here cultivated; while, not to omit one of the latest introductions in this country, the gutta-percha is produced in high perfection. Indigo has also been introduced, and is said to promise equally favourable results.

In addition to the land secured by the grant, some other property, in course of cultivation, has also been acquired, which promises most favourably to be a successful undertaking, and thus enhances the value of the other property granted by the Rajah. We have, as a matter of curiosity, as well as interest, endeavoured to arrive at results as to the periods when the produce may be expected to be returned after planting; and, without pledging ourselves to the strict accuracy of the returns, we believe the following will be found near the mark: Sugar, 18 months after planting; cotton, six months; coffee, 18 months; sago, five years; nutmegs, five years; cocoa nuts, five years; vegetable tallow, 18 months; black pepper, six months; Cayenne pepper, the like time; ginger, 12 months; rice, 12 months; arrow-root, the like period; and gutta-percha, seven years. We may here observe that, without reference to the transit of the produce, the communication between this country and Sarawak, by Overland mail, is set down at 45 days.

Having thus given an outline of the contemplated advantages arising from colonising this tract, as to vegetable and surface products, it now becomes our province to advert to the mineral products of the country. It would appear that a large quantity of gold dust is annually raised – some specimens of which, in large grains, have been submitted to us – as also antimony, which is obtained of a superior nature, and in much larger needles than we have before seen it. A considerable quantity of the former the Chinese obtain by washing the earth and delving to a depth of some 4 to 5ft – the gold dust, from its specific gravity, having made its way through the alluvial, or lighter, soil. The value of the grant thus secured by Mr. Williams is greatly enhanced by the right conferred in it to work the gold dust throughout the territory at an easy royalty; and it is intended to put a force to work at one or two of the principal points, which have been described to us on the chart – a copy of which we possess, and which we shall be happy to submit to the inspection of any party who may feel an interest in this undertaking.

We need hardly say that, in directing attention to Sarawak, or Labuan, we have a British colony; the management and supreme power over which is placed in the hands of the Rajah – an Englishman of whom, indeed, England may be proud; and which has been already manifested by her Majesty and the Government. We, therefore, hail with pleasure the prospect of this rising colony speedily becoming the object of British enterprise; for we understand that Mr. Williams is now under the special patronage of the Rajah, who has shown such perfect confidence in his zeal and intelligence to carry out the project, by conceding to him so valuable a grant as we have described; and who proposes, with the assistance of gentlemen of capital and enterprise in London, to form a company by whom the products of the country, both mineral and agricultural, will speedily be turned to profitable advantage, which its immense and valuable resources are so well calculated to yield.

The Mining Journal

26th February 1848

Page 101 Col. 2

Letter: Explosions of Fire-Damp Connected with Falls in the Barometer.

Sir, - The fearful loss of life that annually takes place in our collieries demands the serious consideration of all friends of humanity; therefore, I request the favour of being allowed to occupy a small portion of your columns, for the purpose of giving a little information, which may tend to prevent some of such casualties.

In my communications with owners and overlookers of mines, for the last ten years, I have constantly called their attention to the liberation of light carburetted hydrogen gas – or “fire-damp,” as it is usually called – on sudden falls of the barometer. A vague opinion prevails amongst most working colliers, that explosions of fire-damp are in some means connection with the state of the weather; but nothing in the way of precaution is derived from it. By examining the times of the occurrence of the accidents with a record of the changes of the barometer, many of the former will be found to have taken place when that instrument marked the lowest pressure of the atmosphere, and more especially on the occasion of a sudden fall, after it had stood high for a considerable time.

The late accident at Heathfield, near West Bromwich, recorded in your columns, by which a number of valuable lives were sacrificed, is a proof of the connection of explosions of fire-damp with depressions of the barometer. This lamentable event took place on Wednesday morning, the 9th inst., at about 6 o'clock a.m. By consulting the published barometrical observations, it will be found that the mercury stood at 11 o'clock a.m. on the 8th inst., at 29.67in; at 4 p.m., of that day, it had fallen to 29.53; at 12 o'clock at night, to 29.10; whilst at 10 a.m. on the 9th, it had gone down to 28.63 – thus showing a depression of 1.04 of an inch in 24 hours, and the maximum depression about the time of the accident.

Fissures in rocks, and porous strata near to seams of coal, generally contain fire-damp. When these are opened, by sinking shafts, the gas contained in them on the “dip,” or lower portion of the mine, will, for the most part, gradually escape, owing to its specific gravity being much lighter than common air; but it will be confined in the rise, or upper part of the strata, just like gas under a receiver, in a pneumatic trough, is by a column of water. The waste, or place where the coal has been removed, on the rise of the mine, if unventilated, which is but too frequently the case, will also be a vast gas holder. So long as the pressure of the atmosphere remains the same, the gas will continue pent up in the fissure of the rock, or confined to the waste; but as soon as the pressure diminishes, out rushes a volume of gas into the workings; and, if naked candles are used, explosions like that at West Bromwich ensue.

No scientific instrument is of greater value than the barometer to the owner and overlooker of a colliery; and no establishment ought to be without one placed near each upcast pit; and both overlookers and men ought to be directed constantly to observe it, and regulate the ventilation of the mine according to it.

I by no means intend that a barometer should dispense with good ventilation, the careful examination of workings by a competent officer prior to the men being set to work, or the use of Davy lamps, when necessary; but only contend, that the barometer ought to be carefully observed, so that the currents of the air courses underground may be increased when, by its fall, it indicates a lightening of atmospheric pressure, and the consequent extraordinary liberation of

gas in the mine. Especial care ought always to be directed to ventilation, whenever the mercury in the barometer begins to fall, after it has been standing at a great height for a considerable time previously.

Some accidents will, with the best management, occasionally occur in coal mines; but a great many of them most undoubtedly can, and ought to, be prevented. Both for the sake of preserving the lives of workmen, and for the purpose of preventing the loss of property caused by explosions in collieries, every precaution ought always to be used; and, certainly, the trifling expense of providing and carefully observing a barometer or two, ought not for a moment to be considered.

40 Cross Street, Manchester, Feb. 20

Edward W. Binney

The Mining Journal

26th February 1848

Page 98 Col. 3

Accidents.

Wheal Reeth – W. Lawry, aged 13, while employed in the 40fm level, and preparing a hole for blasting, went to fetch a can of powder, which exploded, and so injured him, that he lingered eight days and expired.

Workworth – H. Corbitt was killed by the falling of roof in the Radclyffe Colliery.

Bilston – L. Dando was killed by an explosion while working in New Field Colliery.

The late Fatal Explosion of Firedamp in South Staffordshire – The adjourned inquest on the bodies of the unfortunate men who were killed by the explosion in the Heathfield coalpit on Wednesday fortnight, was resumed and concluded on Saturday. Two of the injured men have died since the last meeting of the jury – making in all 10. The evidence produced was to the same effect as that already before the public. The coroner having summed up, the jury agreed to the following verdict: - "That it has been through the negligence of John Meek, the doggy, that these men lost their lives; and they, therefore, return a verdict of manslaughter against him." – Meek, who is a man from 35 to 40 years of age, was then committed to take his trial at the next Stafford assizes.

Colliery on Fire – On Sunday week, a discovery was made that the Nine-Foot colliery at Burnden, Great Lever, Yorkshire, the property of the Earl of Bradford, was on fire, although the men left every thing apparently safe on Saturday night. It is supposed to have resulted from the ignition of a flue of an engine in the works below. At first it was attempted to put it out by a small fire-engine lowered into the pit, and afterwards two others were brought into requisition, but proved of no avail; and it was at length decided to stop up the pit's mouth, and this smother it for want of air. A slight explosion took place, but fortunately no lives and very little property was lost.

Briery Wood, near Unstone – J. Silcock, of Newbold, was killed in consequence of some bind falling upon him.

Woodfield Colliery, Crook – J. Spence was killed here by a mass of coal of a ton weight falling on him, he was taken out quite dead.

Dreadful Colliery Explosion – Four Lives Lost – On Wednesday evening, one of those awful occurrences, a coal-pit explosion, took place at the colliery of Messrs. Swire and Lees, Dukinfield, known as the Victoria Pit, which has resulted in the death of four persons, and three others, who were severely injured, are not expected to survive. From the facts which we have been, hurriedly, to obtain, it appears that the colliers were at work, about five o'clock, when some of them had got into some old workings, with a lighted candle, not taking the usual precaution of using a safety-lamp. The foul air, which appears to have been deeply impregnated, exploded, causing the instantaneous death of four men, and a number of others are seriously burnt, three of whom are not expected to live. Two of the young men killed are brothers; and their father, who is said to have had the naked candle in his hand which was the cause of the explosion, is also much burned, and but little hopes are entertained of his recovery. The pit where the accident happened is the deepest in the neighbourhood, and more lives are said to have been

lost in it than in all the others put together. Great pains have been taken to prevent the men working with naked lights, but all attempts hitherto made have -----