

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 3rd. May 1856

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Advert - To Ironstone Getters.

To be let, by contract, the getting of ironstone on the Whittington Estate. For particulars, apply at the West Staveley Colliery office, Whittington.

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The Victoria Lead Mine, Ashover.

The shareholders of this mine had a meeting on Wednesday, at the Commercial Inn, Chesterfield - C. Binns, Esq., in the chair. The financial position of the company was found to be in a satisfactory state, and a resolution was passed to sink down to the toadstone at once, a sufficient number of the new preference shares have be taken to carry out the necessary works.

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Whittington - New Blast Furnaces.

Two new blast furnaces for the manufacture of iron are about to be erected by a company of gentlemen residing in Sheffield, contiguous to the branch line of railway, which has been lately constructed for the Midland Main Line, about a mile north of the Lockoford Works, near Chesterfield, for the conveyance of coal and minerals, from the West Staveley Colliery, belonging to Messrs. Harrison and Company, of Barnsley. Other furnaces on a more extended scale, we hear, will shortly be added, so that in a few years we shall, in all probability, have a second miniature Staveley, on no despicable scale, springing up at the eastern end of Whittington, in which parish, vast treasures of mineral wealth, both of coal and ironstone, still remain to be developed. Colliery works are being proceeded with on the estate of Sir R. Sitwell, near Renishaw, which are expected to be of an extensive nature. The coal trade is very inactive for some kinds, although we are happy to perceive symptoms of improvement are beginning to manifest themselves in more extended orders for manufacturing purposes. Clay Cross coal is selling at 13-6d. per ton in the London market, which is a lower figure than this excellent coal has been quoted at for some time back. The iron trade remains tolerably brisk and buoyant, there being a strong expectation that railway demands for foreign lines will shortly be very considerable.

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The Eyam Mining Company.

At a dinner after the annual meeting of the above company on Friday last, Mr. J. Pitt, the chairman, stated that the company had purchased the mines for £620, and since that time the shareholders had received, in dividends, 15 times the purchase money - that the lords of the fields were receiving annually from the company more than the original cost of the mine for royalty, and that if the mines were to be sold as the price now given for each share, they would realise £38,000.

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Magisterial Business.

The only case heard today was that of Thomas Carrigan, who preferred a complaint against R. Barrow, Esq., of Staveley, for refusing to pay him 11-4d., being the amount which he considered due to him. The plaintiff failed to substantiate his claim, and the case, after being heard at considerable length, was finally dismissed.

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Advert - To Builders, Masons, and Bricklayers.

To be let by tender, the building of ten workmen's cottages, in connection with West Staveley Colliery. For particulars, specifications, etc., apply at the office, Whittington, near Chesterfield, or to Mr. T. Harrison, colliery owner, of Barnsley, Yorkshire.

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The Rating of Mines.

Public Meeting in Chesterfield.

A public meeting, convened by placard, for the purpose of considering the best measures to be adopted to resist the proposed parliamentary bill for the rating of mines to the relief of the poor, was held in the Municipal Hall, Chesterfield, on Monday evening. The Mayor presided, and there were present only a few gentlemen interested in mining, - a clause having been inserted in the bill especially providing for the North Derbyshire mining interests, of which Mr. Burgoyne, of Leam Hall, who attended to address the meeting, had not been able to give notice. However, although we are happy to say that there was no necessity for the opposition, government having conceded what North Derbyshire demanded, we give Mr. Burgoyne's speech, which may be interesting to some of our readers. He said: -

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, - I hold in my hand the third bill which has been introduced into parliament within the past twelve months, to alter and change the customs in regard to mining - customs which have been established for some hundreds of years. The greatest commercial importance is its staple trade, by which we all exist - the staple trade of our county is lead mining by which hundreds receive their daily bread. It affects the whole district. The act for rating at all had its commencement in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and, if I recollect rightly, in the year 1763 a case was brought before Lord Mansfield for decision as to whether lead mines were liable to be rated or not, and he gave his judgment in favour of lead mines, for unlike coal lead is very uncertain of discovery. It is also very uncertain, even when mines are discovered, whether they can be worked to a profit - so Lord Mansfield gave his decision that lead mines were exempt from being rated by the act, and he was supported in that decision by Mr. Justice Wilmott. It subsequently, however, appeared, that there were rates imposed on dues, and the dues paid to the lord of minerals, were universally paid in kind and liable to be rated. It was the custom in every place for miners to pay their dues in the same kind of minerals they raised from the earth whether lead or copper, and that gave rise to the term of "kind" in this country. A rate was imposed upon these dues, but Cornwall and some other places, which paid in kind, began to pay their dues, at the suggestion of the lords of minerals, in money, and thus evaded and set aside the force of the law, which only imposed the rate when dues were paid in kind. There were great facilities for the lords of minerals in Cornwall to do this, for every man was a lord who held a plot of ground under which the minerals lay, because the tile went with the freehold. Now in Derbyshire, the custom is that the purchaser of the freehold has nothing beyond the surface - the minerals do not belong to him, and he purchases his fee-simple with the understanding that he must find water and every convenience without the slightest prospect of recompense for the lead miner, who discovered the ore on his (the purchaser's) land. It was by custom, and by certain dispensation of the crown that rates were paid in kind. Therefore, there was every facility for the people of Cornwall to change their custom and - I do not like to apply to it so strong a term as fraud - to evade and pervert the law of the land. It may naturally be supposed that the small lord - the man of small means, was more likely to resort to this fraud than the man who had a prestige to sustain - who had a position and appearance to maintain. It is more likely that the small lords should do it, than the man who holds a first-class position in society, and perhaps is in close alliance with his Queen administering the laws of the land, and probably at law-maker too. In Derbyshire the lords of minerals are our Dukes. Queen Victoria is supreme and she appoints the Duke of Devonshire to enforce the dues. The executors of P. Gell

were the lessees of these dues, and they would never for such paltry reasons change their customs for the evasion of the law. All rating has a basis - and that basis, of course, is framed on the supposition that there is an object upon which to levy. Mines are not property always - we should not impose a rate upon the mere foundations on which a house is to be built - it must be a completed tenement, and there must also be a tenant and a return for the outlay. All rating supposes that the object upon which it rests is real property, and I would ask where can you find any real property in mining? But these rates assumed the form of dues. The first moment the vein is discovered one-thirteenth portion is paid over to the Queen, or rather to the farmer of her dues. For instance, if thirteen tons are raised, one-thirteenth, without any cost to the Queen, is handed over to her Majesty, although you may lay out hundreds and thousands of pounds before you recover thirteen tons, and you may expend thousands more before you make your mine of commercial value by making the receipts greater than the disbursements; but notwithstanding, as I said before, her Majesty continues to receive one-thirteenth during the whole of that period. But we have no complaints against our mineral lords - they have always paid their poor rates - and we have always paid their dues. But the lords in Cornwall, whose fee simple entitles them to become lords of the land, we have complaints against, because they paid their tolls in money, instead of kind in order to evade the law. However, the House of Lords got to hear of it, and the Poor Law Board threatened to investigate the matter, intimating that if the Cornwall people did not bring in a bill, they would do so to regulate the payment of their dues throughout the country. Fearful that the Poor Law Board would bring in a bill to place the old saddle on their backs three of the Cornwall members brought in a bill, but they made no distinction between those who had been robbers of the law, and those who had been faithful and obedient to the law; they attempted without any distinction, I say, to alter the customs of rating by proposing that commissioners should come down and value lead in the same manner as they did coal mines. Now, as my friend Mr. Hindmarsh well knows, we can put down a rod of iron, and tell the cost of the coal and its quantity. We can tell how much it will cost per ton for raising to the surface, and we can make our calculations of profit and loss; and, after all, we can please ourselves whether we will work the mine or not. Now, in mining we are spending thousands of pounds at a time without any recompense, and, at all events, without positive probability of certain profit. And yet these Cornwall miners attempted to place us on the same footing as coal mines. We thought this so inconsistent that we called a meeting together, and upset the measure. And then they saw their error, and were ashamed of themselves - and well they might be ashamed of themselves, too - and, they brought in an amendment to rate the dues in a manner more preposterous than proposed by the original bill; they were proposing not only to rate something which was not property, but rating an absolute loss. The bill proposed that the fact of the criterion of value should be the dues paid to the lord, and, as I have before stated, these dues were levied on the first raising of anything of value. If thirteen pounds weight of ore was raised, one pound of it went to the lord, and so it continued and if you raised hundreds of tons without any advantage, still the one-thirteenth went to the lord, so that it was an absolute loss. And this you would find, gentlemen, when you came to take your books and take out the one-thirteenth from all your raisings; but although you might have an absolute loss, still you pay your dues to your lord. And yet these Cornwall legislators brought in their amendment, inflicting on the parties who paid the rates a double loss - the loss on the thirteenth and the loss on the rates of that thirteenth, which was, to us, a fact so grievous that we appealed to parliament and upset the amendment also; and so it remained until last december, when Mr. Kendall wrote to Sir Joseph Paxton the following letter: -

Pelyn, December 23rd.,

1855.

Sir - I had the pleasure of discussing with you, during the last session, matters connected with the bill I brought in for the rating of the royalties of mines, and you objected to it on the ground that many of the clauses would press heavily and unfairly on some mines in your district.

I withdrew the bill at the earnest solicitation of yourself and others, that there might be some time for the consideration of so important a matter.

A meeting takes place at Truro, in this county, on the 31st. and the object is to reconcile, if possible, the conflicting interests of the miner and rate-payer; but as my belief is that the real objection to the bill lie out of the county, and particularly in your district, I shall be very glad to receive your opinions on the matter before the 31st., that I may submit them to the meeting as an element for discussion and consideration.

I feel you will excuse my troubling you, and I shall feel further obliged if you can induce any other of those gentlemen I saw with you to communicate with me on the subject.

I am, yours very truly, N. Kendall.

After the receipt of this letter, Sir Joseph Paxton asked me whether the opinions of the North Derbyshire people were the same as on the last occasion they met together. I told him that they had not changed their opinions, and I also made several suggestions to him, and told him what alone would purchase the silence of North Derbyshire. Sir Joseph Paxton then wrote to Mr. Kendall, and, in accordance with the request of the latter, Mr. Kendall wrote to Sir Joseph Paxton and informed him that he had inserted a clause specially to satisfy the people of this county; and before the bill was printed, many members, who seemed to consider the interests of North Derbyshire, wrote to me on the subject, and amongst the rest, your excellent member, Mr. Cavendish. I will read you his letter.

3, Upper Eccleston Street, Belgrave Square, April 28th., 1856

Dear Sir - The Cornish Members have thought right to introduce their bill for rating mines again. I do not at present know for what day the second reading stands, but it is very desirable that no time should be lost in sending up petitions against the bill.

I hardly thought they would have ventured to bring in the bill again. I will send you a copy of the bill tomorrow.

Yours faithfully, G.H. Cavendish.

P.S. I need hardly say that I shall do my best to oppose the bill. Indeed, I think there is no fear of its being allowed to pass. The bill was only printed this morning.

Immediately I got this letter, I had another from Mr. Hadfield, the member for Sheffield, on the question, sending me copies of the bill, and saying -

I think Mr. Kendall would be too glad to admit all you wish, in order to get rid of your opposition, but it is doubtful whether government will allow it, and if we pass it in the House of Commons, it must be very carefully watched in the House of Lords, as they have passed a resolution to rate all mines.

I recommend very prompt measures to be taken, and that your clause be agreed upon before the bill is allowed to be read a second time.

Immediately on the receipt of this letter we put ourselves in communication with the whole of North Derbyshire, from Glossop down to Youlgrave, Bakewell, and other places, the effect of which was that fifty petitions were ready directly for opposing the bill; but a copy of the bill was handed to me, and finding that the second clause provided for all we wanted, I sent a messenger and stopped the petitions. This clause says: -

"Where, under any Lease or Grant in operation at the time of the passing of this Act, the Lord shall, before the passing of this Act, have paid any Rate or Assessment, or but for the Provisions of this Act would be liable to be assessed to any Rate for the Relief of the Poor, in respect of the Royalty, Toll, or Dues, reserved by such Lease or Grant, it shall be lawful for the Occupiers to deduct from the Royalty, Toll, or Dues payable under any such Lease or Grant all Sums of Money, which, by virtue of the Provisions of this Act, shall be assessed on such Occupiers in respect of such Mine, during the Continuance of such Lease or Grant; and the Lord shall allow such Deductions in part Payment thereof, provided there be no Covenant or Agreement to the contrary contained in any such Lease or Grant.

Now, in North Derbyshire as Sir Joseph Paxton told Mr. Kendall the lord has always paid the rate, and consequently this clause says he shall always continue to do so; but another clause of the act, referring to where the dues have been paid in kind, says it shall be divided between the finder and the lord. North Derbyshire, I fancy, is the only place where they continued to pay their dues in kind, and consequently they are exempted from the operation of this act. On behalf of the people of North Derbyshire, I now return my thanks to those members who upheld us in our difficulties, as we are perfectly satisfied with the clause applicable to us. Now it is a question if we can help our neighbours in the south of Derbyshire, some of whom, having paid in money, are amenable to that measure. I was at Worksop the other day, and it was suggested that Mr. Hubbersty should be sent to London respecting the measure to combat it for the people of the south. But in the south gentlemen were satisfied with the bill in general, and if the third clause was made constitutional with the second, they would not oppose the bill, but would assist to carry it. Mr. Hubbersty, who is an excellent mining lawyer as well as parliamentary agent, is going to London to do his best for them. I am not acquainted with Ashover and that district; but if you have paid in kind it will be well to assist and give way to the operation of this clause. In conclusion, gentlemen, I am greatly obliged to you for your consideration in listening to my few remarks, I should not have come over had not the arrangements for the co-operation in Chesterfield in opposition to the bill been made before I got it; but members had suggested the propriety of combination in the matter, and I had not time to tell you that your attendance was not necessary. I must return my thanks to the Mayor for his condescension in presiding this evening, and I beg to propose a vote of thanks to him for presiding at this meeting.

The vote of thanks having been accorded to the chairman the meeting separated.

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Advert - Sales by Mr. S. Denham.

To Coal and Iron Masters.

Mr. S. Denham has received instructions from Messrs. Goodwin, Parker, and Company, to sell by auction, at the Gas House Colliery, Brampton, near Chesterfield, (in consequence of the colliery being finished) the whole of the

Colliery Plant,

on Wednesday, the 4th. of June, 1856, at 12 o'clock.

A Six Horse Vertical High-Pressure Engine, with drum and winding gear complete;

A Twelve Horse High-Pressure Direct Acting Pumping Engine, with boilers, 21 feet by 3 feet, and 20 yards of 10 inch pump trees.

Two sets of headgear, with wire conductors, pulley wheels, etc.; two wrought iron chairs, 29 pit waggons, quantity of corves, wire and hemp ropes, about 10 tons of metal turndoor, 15 to 20 tons of wrought iron peg rails, wedges, ringers, chains, dressers, and other colliery implements; two fire-pans, two coal tippers, two screens, coal shunts, quantity of old metal, iron piping, punch wood and sleepers, stones, bricks, etc.; ??????, store room, smith's shop, bellows, anvil, and sundry other colliery tools.

Six Ton Weighing Machine.

About 300 feet of ash poles, in lots to suit purchasers.

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No Headline.

On Tuesday night a petition was presented by Mr. Hadfield from the Eyam Mining Company, Derbyshire, against the bill for assessing mines, or that clauses might be inserted as would leave unaltered the present law, making "lords" liable to be rated, or as would compel the "lords", where now rateable, to re-imburse the workers of mines for payments which they might make for such rates, although such mines may not be worked under a lease or grant now in operation.

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Fatal Accident.

A fatal accident occurred at Whittington, on Tuesday. The unfortunate deceased, George Cupit, (aged 28) was returning home in the evening, accompanied by his father. They passed near a pit in the Grange Wood Close, and some remark having been made by the deceased as to the quantity of water in the pit, he proceeded to ascertain if his opinion was correct. In order to look down the shaft, he knelt at the edge and placed his hand upon a beam of wood which lay across. The wood being rotten, it gave way; and before the father of the deceased could render him any assistance, he was precipitated to the bottom of the pit, a distance of 60 feet. The father immediately raised an alarm, and assistance being procured, the unfortunate man was released from his perilous situation; it was then ascertained that his thigh was broken, and that he had sustained other severe injuries from which he shortly afterwards died. On Wednesday, an inquest was held on the body and verdict of "Accidental Death" was returned.

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Fatal Accident at Tapton Colliery.

Yesterday (Friday), an inquest was held at the "Black Bull" on the body of Roger Kidger, who died on Saturday last, from injuries he had sustained by an accident at the Tapton Colliery. From the evidence it appeared that for the last 7 or 8 years, the unfortunate man had been employed at the pit as manager. On the 16th. of April, he was engaged in wedging coal, and notwithstanding the remonstrances of his fellow workmen, persisted in sitting under the coal he was wedging. A large mass, weighing upwards of half-a-ton fell upon him, and injured him very severely. He was extricated as speedily as possible and conveyed home, where he died on Saturday last. The jury, after a brief consultation, returned a verdict of accidental death. It appeared that the proprietor of the pit, Mr. Clayton, had no printed rules placarded in the pit, according to the requisitions of the act of parliament; neither had he forwarded information of the accident to the Secretary of State, as he ought to have done, thereby rendering himself liable to a heavy penalty. During the past week, the pit has been inspected by Mr. Hindley, one of the inspectors of coal mines, and although its condition is satisfactory, it was hinted that it was probable a prosecution might be instituted against the proprietor for non-compliance with the provisions of the act of parliament.

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Trade of South Wales.

The various metal, shipping, and other returns show that the trade of South Wales is in a most improving state. A large increasing amount of coal finds its way to the sea-ports, as the quantity cut and raised is daily enlarging. The great demand in all quarters for steam coal has given a wonderful impulse into the coal districts, in all directions extensions of works are in progress, and in the Aberdare valley new pits are being opened. The ports of Cardiff, Newport, Neath, and Swansea, show a large increase of exports and imports, while the latter place derives an import tonnage has been to a very great extent. The various dock extensions are progressing, and shortly a vast amount of railway enterprise will be brought into operation. The demand for anthracite is also increasing, so that fresh pits have been opened.

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Blasting Paper for Miners.

We understand that an American has discovered what he designates "a blasting paper", which is pronounced by old miners a desideratum; it is thin, flexible, and perfectly solid; impervious to water or moisture, and not a pore exists in it. Water may be kept in it for 24 hours without losing a drop, and further an egg can be boiled in it, on a stove, and yet the paper not be wetted through by the boiling water. In the drill hole it will not occupy so much room as the thick paper usually made use of in wet places; and whatever length of time it may be kept there, by accident, the powder will be kept dry, and thereby not only is the price of the powder saved, but the labour of drilling out and re-charging the blast.

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Patent Signal Bell for Mines.

A bell of great power of action and extreme neatness of construction for signalling up and down shafts, inclines, etc., of collieries, has been patented by Messrs. Gulliver and Goldthorpe, of Barnsley. It is said to be a great improvement on the clumsy signal at present in use, and finds easy adaptation to any position, its durability, and convenient form, appears likely to become generally employed in the collieries of the United Kingdom. The signal consists of an ordinary flat bell, attached to a plate of iron, having on one side a hammer lever, which turns on a stud against a spring, and on the other side the mechanism by which the bell is sounded. This consists of three arms of a cross, moving on a centre, to the first or upper arm which is attached the actuating cord; to the second, or horizontal arm, a counter weight; and to the third, or lower arm, a slider and bolt, formed with a taper point and a notch, the notch being arranged to catch the short arm of the hammer lever. From this it will be seen the actuating cord acts as a lever power upon the sliding bolt, by which the hammer is made to strike the bell. When the cord is drawn the sliding bolt causes the hammer lever to turn upon its stud, until the short arm becomes free from the notch, the spring behind the longer arm of the hammer lever throwing the hammer forcefully against the bell. By the action of the counter weight, the hammer lever immediately becomes again engaged in the notch in readiness for another stroke. The inventors have received highly flattering testimonials from numerous collieries where they are in use, among which we may mention those of Hoyland and Elsecar, Wombwell Main, Oaks, Mount Osborne, Edmunds Main, North Bitchburn, Springs, Ince Lake and Parkgate; and we understand that the signals are also in use at most collieries in Yorkshire, at a large number of those in Lancashire, Staffordshire, Durham and Northumberland. It is also anticipated that the application of the invention will not be confined to mines, but will be extensively employed by railway companies for signalling through tunnels to distant parts of stations, works, etc.

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Dreadful Colliery explosion.

A dreadful colliery explosion occurred at Carnarvon, Glamorganshire, in the works of the Governor and Company of Copper Mines, on Saturday last, about 10 o'clock in the morning, whereby ten men were killed or died before they reached their homes, and two more are since dead; several others were slightly burned or injured. The cause of the accident is at present unknown.

(N.B. Cwm Avon Colliery - Explosion of firedamp caused by safety lamp).

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Serious Accident.

An accident of a serious nature occurred last week at Newbold to a quarryman, named William Beaver, who, while engaged at work in a quarry near Newbold, was accidentally pitched down an embankment about 4 or 5 yards high, and alighting upon his head, he sustained a fracture of the skull, besides a severe injury of the spine. The unfortunate man, under medical attendance, is progressing towards recovery.