

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 7th. November 1863.

Page 2 Col. 1.

Advert - Colliers Wanted.

20 or 30 good pickmen can have regular employment and good wages, at West Staveley Colliery. - Apply at the Works.

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Advert - Colliers Wanted.

Constant and regular employment can be found for an increased number of colliers and boys at Aston Colliery.

The proprietors have a few newly erected cottages to let near to the works.

Apply at Aston Colliery, Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway, Woodhouse Junction, near Sheffield.

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Alfreton - Dreadful Accident at Swanwick Colliery.

On Friday morning week the inhabitants of Alfreton, Greenhill Lane, Riddings, and Swanwick, were alarmed by the appalling news that water had burst into the Swanwick Colliery, from an old working, which had been disused for many years. As it was known that at least two hundred men and boys must be employed down the pit at the time, the most dreadful forebodings were entertained of their safety. The collier portion of the population were instantly emotioned, especially those who had friends or relations in the pit. But we are truly thankful to be able to record that the sacrifice of life has not been so great as was at first supposed. All the men have been got to the bank alive, with two exceptions - that of a man named Charles Bramley, of Greenhill Lane, who has left a widow and four small children, the oldest not quite six years old, and man named Samuel Calladine, who cannot be found, although the most diligent search has been made. We have just visited the pit-bank, and found that Calladine was discovered on Tuesday morning at two o'clock, quite dead. From the best information we are able to collect, we will lay before our readers the account of the accident. On Friday morning, about 215 men and boys were employed down the pit, when the two deceased men, Bramley and Calladine, and another man named John Steeples, who were all working near each other, gave the alarm that water was coming from an old working close to where they were at work. This was about half past seven. Every man hurried to the bottom of the shaft, as fast as the rushing water would allow them, some with their clothes under their arms, others with nothing on but the clothes in which they had been working. These left all their tools in their several places of work. Those who had the charge of the horses (18 in number) and the asses (5 in number) down the pit left them where they had been at work; but they were afterwards collected in the stables by men less frightened than the drivers. One of these men gave a vivid picture of one of the levels as the men were hurrying along. Some of their faces exhibited the marks of the greatest terror. Two or three old men, who trousers were wide in the legs, were impeded in their flight by the quantity of water their unmentionables took in, and the great rush of water, which rendered them almost exhausted ere they reached the shaft bottom. Directly the rush of water was heard at the top, the engines were set in motion, both to pump out the water and to draw out the men. The men were speedily brought to the top, when it was discovered that three were missing, Chas. Bramley, Samuel Calladine, and John Steeples, who were said to be two of the most powerful and best workmen in the pit. The first rush of water was so great that it was determined to send down the horse box and save the horses; but it was soon seen that the water did not increase, that it gradually got lower, as it went into the other levels and was pumped out; it was thought necessary to bring them up. A diligent search was commenced for the missing men. After some time Charles Bramley was discovered quite dead. On Saturday a search was conducted under the superintendence of Messrs. Woodhouse and Jeffcock, of Derby, the engineers of the proprietors. From eight to ten men were down at once, and were relieved every six hours, a plentiful supply of brandy, bread and cheese, and ale being furnished to the explorers. On Saturday afternoon at three o'clock, Steeples was heard shouting, and he was discovered jammed on the top of some backings. As soon as possible he was released, and it was nine o'clock before he was brought to the bank, in a very exhausted state; but he was able to walk home, and it now quite recovered. A renewed search was made for Calladine all Sunday, Monday, and Monday night. He was found as before stated, about two o'clock on Tuesday morning, in one of the old workings. He was traced into a boot-hole, but he left this, and after wandering about he appeared to have got through the hole made by the water into the old working and seemed to be making his way to another exit from the pit when death overtook him.

His body now awaits a coroner's inquest. An inquest was held upon Bramley's body on Saturday, and he was interred at the Independent Chapel, Riddings, on Tuesday. Mr. Hedley, Government Inspector, was over the pit on Monday, and work recommenced on Wednesday morning.

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Threatened Strike among the Welsh Colliers.

The demand for coal at the Welsh ports continues, and from several causes the supply is far short of the demand. One of these causes is that, from the short sighted policy instilled into the minds of the colliers by interested parties, they almost to a man refuse to work more than seven or eight hours a day, or, what amounts to the same thing, if they are compelled to remain below ground for a longer period, they do not send up a larger quantity of coal that they could do in the time indicated. The principal cause of the short supply is, however, to be attributed to the fact that during the past summer, and indeed for several years, vast numbers of colliers and experienced puddlers have emigrated to America for a view of proceeding to Salt Lake. Many of these men found it more advantageous to remain in the northern states, and the result has been that through the representations they have sent home of the high price obtained for labour a constant drain of the most provident class of workmen is going on. the idea of the colliers is that by keeping the supply short at a time when there is an unprecedented demand they will thereby force the masters to increase the price of cutting. During the week a monster meeting of colliers was held on top of a central mountain in the Aberdare valley, and was attended by thousands. The men, without the least notice, absented themselves from work the whole day, which in itself was a most serious loss to the proprietors. The immediate object of the meeting was to consider the propriety of joining the North Country Colliers Association, and to take steps for securing an advance of wages. It was resolved that the colliers of Wales should not at present join the northern union, but establish one of their own. With regard to the question of wages, it was resolved that a deputation from each colliery should wait upon the proprietors, and ask for a rise of 10 percent. In the event of this not being complied with the whole of the men would tender a month's notice on Monday next. The greatest fears are entertained that, unless forbearance and discretion characterise the conduct of both parties, a rupture will ensure - an event which would prove disastrous to all parties concerned. It is understood that the workers in s(t)eam coal will be raised 10 percent on the 1st. of November, but it is doubtful as to whether the rise will extend to the bituminous coal workers.

Western Daily Press.

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A Fortunate Miner.

The Watty claim which is generally understood to belong to Mr. Cameron, has been worked out. It was yielded \$160,000 during the summer to a hundred foot of ground. Between the amount realised out of this claim and the Cameron Company, Mr. Cameron, it is asserted on good authority, will retire to Canada, his native country in the course of a couple of months, with a fortune of \$250,000. This gentleman has been the most fortunate miner, in a pecuniary sense, who has ever tried his luck in British Columbia. Less than 18 months since he arrived on William's Creek with very little money - not \$200 - and a small stock of goods, and during the short intervening period has succeeded in amassing the enormous fortune we have mentioned out of the mining claims alone.

Vancouver Island Express.

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Staveley - Fatal Accident at Seymour Colliery.

An inquest was held on Thursday last at the house of Mr. William Worrall, Albert Inn, Staveley Woodthorpe, touching the death of Edward Ellis, of Seymour, aged 50 years, pony driver. The deceased was helping another pony driver, named William Bennett, to drive in Seymour pit, on Friday evening, about eight o'clock. The deceased was leading the pony, which drew two tubs down the road, and had hold of the pony's head. Bennett had opened one door for him, and deceased sent him forward to open another, when the pony and tubs passed through the front door before he had opened the second. The deceased fell whilst he had hold of the pony's head between the rails, and was killed on the spot, the tubs having passed over him. Verdict "Accidental Death".

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Staveley - Wages Case.

Richard Hudson claimed from Emmanuel Bainbridge the sum of 8-3d. for work done at the West Staveley Colliery. After a long and patient investigation the claim was disallowed, complainant being exempted from any further costs.

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Leaving Service.

William Straw, John Payne and Thomas Newham were each charged by Thomas Eggleston with leaving service from the West Staveley Colliery without giving the usual notice. They were each ordered to return and pay costs, 8-6d.

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Derbyshire Mining.

The continued improvement which has been manifested in the iron trade in the last few weeks now prevails with, if anything, increased activity, and all the works are in full operation. The inquiry for bars and plates is very active, and, judging from the numerous surveys which are being made for new lines of railway, there is no doubt that the demand for railway iron, which is now very active, will continue for some time to come. There is the greatest possible activity in the demand for armour plates of the different factories in Yorkshire; and judging from the orders on hand, there will be plenty of work for some time to come. The coal trade is in a very active state, and in many districts there are not sufficient workmen to be obtained to keep the pits in full operation. The disordered state of feeling in many coal districts in Wales and Yorkshire is creating profound sensations in these counties, and we anticipate that the dissatisfaction will, ere long, show itself in our districts; but as yet nothing has transpired to show that we shall have a general strike. The steel trade is on the improve, and we hear more favourable accounts that the demand for manufactured cutlery than has been known of late. There is much talk of the establishment of a new ironworks in Derbyshire, to equal in extent those of the famous Butterley Company, now decidedly the largest in the county. Notwithstanding the depression which has long prevailed in the manufacturing districts, the demand for locomotives and steam engines has never abated, and now the principal makers have large orders on hand for all kinds of machinery.

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Mill Dam Mining Company.

The last annual general meeting of the Mill Dam Company was held on November the 14th., 1862, but the accounts then laid before the shareholders were made up to September the 13th. only. A resolution having been passed in 1860 that in future the yearly accounts should be printed and circulated among the shareholders at least 14 days before the annual general meeting, the shareholders are beginning to express their dissatisfaction with the accounts for the past year have not been circulated, and notice given of the next annual meeting. The general meetings of the last two years have been delayed several months over the year, and the accounts then presented by the directors have been very unfavourable. To meet the liabilities shown at the last meeting, a resolution was passed to create 1,000 new shares, at £2 per share, which, it is said, the directors have, without further authority, issued. Although that meeting had no power to execute new shares, and no general meeting of the shareholders has been since called, or the requirements of the Joint Stock Company's Act, passed in 1862, necessary to make the creation of new shares legal, complied with, a number of shares into which the mine is divided was 2,000 of £1 each, but an additional 1,000 shares of £2 have the effect of doubling the original number - that is, the shares would be increased from 2,000 to 4,000 of £1 each. The value of the original shares being materially reduced by any addition thereto, it is remarked as unsatisfactory that the share list published in the local papers has ceased to state the number of shares into which the mine is now divided. The Derbyshire lead mines are, on the whole, making steady progress, but there is no movement going on which is worthy of prominent notice. Several public mines are working under disadvantageous circumstances, but taken altogether there is no cause for depression.

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The Conference of Miners at Leeds.

On Monday a conference of the coal miners of the United Kingdom was opened at the People's Hall, in Marshall Street, Leeds, for the purpose of considering several important questions connected with the social and general improvement of the class throughout the country. Among the subjects to be discussed will be that of the education of boys working in collieries; and the prospect of an amelioration of the condition of the labouring miners generally.

There were no fewer than fifty-three delegates present at the preliminary meeting to decide upon the manner in which the discussions should be conducted. All the principal mining districts throughout the empire appeared to be represented, as the following list of localities from which the delegates come will show: - Methley, Glasgow, Leeds, Hunslet, Middlesboro', Durham, Wigan, South Wales, Northumberland, Falkirk, West Yorkshire, South Staffordshire, East Worcestershire, West Bromwich, South Yorkshire, Worsley, Farnworth, Kersley, Thurlford, Gelston, Kilmarnock, Salop, North Wales, etc., etc.

The chair was occupied by Mr. Wm. Pickard, of Ince, Wigan: and Mr. John Pickles acted as secretary pro tem.

After the delegates names had been taken and their certificates vouched.

Mr. Towers, of 7, Burleigh Street, Strand, London, and the secretary of the Miners' National Association, first addressed the meeting. He laid before the assembled delegates an outline of the business to be brought before the conference. The object of the conference he said, was to consider the present condition of the miner, and in what respect that condition could be improved. In his opinion, the first subject for them to consider was the question of the most vital importance, the preservation of the lives of the miners. He, therefore, desired to call their particular attention to the several Acts of Parliament which had been framed for the regulation and inspection of mines. In the second place, it would be necessary for the conference to discuss the question of wages, the truck and tommy systems, and the principle of payment by weight. With regard to the educational aspect of the question, he thought that education was not only of great importance for them to consider, but that the condition of the dwellings of the miners should also be discussed. He did not go particularly either for an eight or a ten hours a day bill, but what he wished to secure for the miner was a fair day's wage, for a fair day's work: and that no boy should be permitted to go into the mine until he is twelve years of age, and not then until he brings with him a certificate from a certified master, and also a certificate from a member of the College of Surgeons, showing that he is physically competent for the work of the mine. He also suggested that each boy up to the age of fourteen should be compelled to go for three hours in three days in each week to the school. It was his idea that the miners' sons should not only know the first four rules of arithmetic, but should also have a smattering of the elements of geology and chemistry, so as to be familiar not only with the geology of the strata in which their lives had to be passed, but also with the composition and the nature of the gases among which they had to work.

Mr. A.M. M'Donald, of Scotland, then moved that three sections of the conference be established: the first to consider the grievances of miners, the second for discussing the

questions of law affecting the working miners, and the third section be devoted to the social economics of the question.

Mr. J. Silkstone, of Rawmarsh seconded the proposition, which was then affirmed.

It was further agreed that Mr. J. Towers be the general secretary of the conference; that Mr. A. M'Donald be the general chairman of the assembly; and that a letter be sent to Mr. Charles Morton, inspector of collieries for this district, advising him that on Wednesday afternoon his conduct as an inspector will be considered so that he may have an opportunity of attending on the occasion.

A mass meeting of miners was subsequently held in the large hall connected with the co-operative stores in Marshall Street, Holbeck, and it was numerously attended. The chair was occupied by Mr. Thomas Stephenson, of Rothwell.

Mr. John Holmes, of Methley, was the first speaker called upon, and he addressed himself principally to the consideration of the reasons which had led to the present movement among the colliers. It had been said that miners were always dissatisfied, that though they made as good wages as joiners and some other artisans, yet that they always appeared to be in a chronic state of discontent. Now his idea was, that miners had been by far too sluggish up to the present time. The lives of that class of labourers were of shorter duration than those of any other class, and for various reasons. He next spoke of the peculiar grievances of a collier's life. With respect to the inspector, he was appointed by the masters. Was not that something like delegating a wolf to take charge of the sheep? Some inspectors did their duty: but in how many instances was the man who wished to discharge his duties opposed tooth and nail by the employers? The evils of the clearance papers were next adverted to. If a man was dissatisfied with his position, his master at once told him he might go away from the pit, but he could not obtain employment elsewhere, for the red cross put on his clearance paper, or the holes punched through it, prevented him from obtaining employment elsewhere. What was the conference met about? It was because miners were not satisfied with things as they are; they considered they were treated more as cattle and slaves than as men; and they had consequently appointed certain delegates to meet to discuss their grievances. All the coal districts of England and Scotland were represented in that assembly, and the delegates had come together for the purpose of receiving information of the injustices under which the class at present suffered. It would afterwards be for them to consider whether they would appeal to Parliament for a remedy, or to public opinion. But suppose the conference arrived at certain resolutions, it would be for the miners of England to see that they were properly carried out. (Hear). This speaker concluded by a brief reference to the injustice of the weighing question; and he contended that the men should have their weighman as well as the master.

The Chairman spoke on the question of inspection, which he contended was at present so utterly inefficient as to be practically worthless. In Belgium there were scarcely ever any accidents in mines; but this was because the pits were in the hands of the Government, which took particular care to ensure a really valuable system of regular inspection.

Mr. Wm. Brown, of Hunslet, in the course of an extended speech, advocated shorter hours of labour per day, a better system of ventilation in mines, and the hearty and unanimous support of the Miner's Association by the body which it was established to benefit. He also contended for a higher scale of morality amongst the miners, telling them that if they would only be sober and industrious men, they would not only command a greater share of respect from their employers, but by their savings they would then be prepared for a rainy day, or for obtaining better terms from their masters than they could at present command.

The proceedings closed shortly after five o'clock.

Tuesday.

This day the proceedings of the convention were continued at the People's Hall, Marshall Street, Leeds. The Rev. J.R. Stephens, of Dukinfield, having opened the meeting with prayer, a long argument took place on the point whether the resolution passed on the previous day, inviting Mr. Charles Morton, the Government Inspector, to attend the discussion to be held on Wednesday afternoon, on the subject of his inspection of mines in the South Yorkshire district, should be rescinded, withdrawn, or abandoned. It was stated by Mr. R. Mitchell, of Barnsley, that Mr. Morton was at present in ill-health, and that his physical inability had latterly operated to prevent him from discharging his duties so efficiently as he would otherwise have done, and he (Mr. Mitchell) held that it would appear somewhat vindictive to allow the resolution to stand in its present form. After considerable argument, an amendment submitted by Mr. Crawford, to the effect that the resolution passed on Monday should be withdrawn for the time being, until the general question of inspection came before the conference, was carried by a majority of 22 to 11. Mr. John Holmes, of Methley, was next appointed treasurer to the conference, and a levy of 10-0d. per delegate was made, with the object of defraying the incidental expenses of the convention. Mr. W. Pickard was then elected vice president of the conference; Mr. W. Crawford, of Durham, as the president of the law section; and Mr. T. Hickman, of North Staffordshire, the secretary. Of the grievance section, Mr. W.H. Miller, of Dudley, was appointed president; and Mr. J. Farrell, of North Staffordshire, secretary. In the department of social organisation, Mr. W. Brown of Hunslet, was elected president, and Mr. D. Thorp, secretary.

Mr. W.H. Miller said he not only represented Dudley, but also the district of Blaenavon. His constituents complained of the truck system, of the long hours they had to work, and of the influence the masters possessed against them. To show what the union had done in his district, he might state that after a lecture he delivered, he at once enrolled 24 members, who all paid up. Three days afterwards that number was increased to 51, and shortly after to something like 200, all of whom had paid up their subscriptions.

Mr. Thos. Griffiths, of South Staffordshire, denounced the employment of girls on the pit bank as a disgraceful and disgusting practice, and contended that it was for the interests of morality and of civilisation that this shameful system should be at once extinguished.

Mr. H.W. Banks, of Willenhall, spoke on the same subject, and in a similar strain; and the system of working long hours also met his condemnation.

Mr. Miller next spoke of his own district, Dudley. He was opposed to the payment of wages in public-houses; and he also spoke strongly on the employment of girls at the pit head.

The President, in an eloquent speech, showed that if any of the Acts of Parliament in respect to mines were infringed upon, any man might act as an inspector or common informer if he thought proper to do so. He wished it to be distinctly understood that with reference to every statute that related to collieries, whether as to females or boys under age, or without qualification, or as to engine-keepers under certain qualifications, or short payment of wages, or other matters to which these statutes referred, informations against the offending parties could be laid by a common informer, so that they would now be aware that every miner could become an inspector, and proceed against his employer, if he thought proper.

Mr. Wm. Bennett, of Croseley, South Staffordshire, complained of the inefficient manner in which the inspection of mines was conducted in his neighbourhood. He further condemned the existing system of calling juries to sit on colliery accidents as they were at present, for it was

ridiculous to expect that cobblers, tailors, nailmakers, shopkeepers, and others, were eligible to judge whether any fatality on which they were called to express an opinion could have been prevented or not by the exercise of ordinary caution. The miners ought to be honestly dealt by, and instead of having such men on the jury, who knew no more about the question than a pig knew how to play a bugle - (laughter) - they ought to have practical men empanelled on such inquiries. (Hear, hear).

Mr. Bryan Smith said that in North Wales there were many miners who hardly knew the inspector at all. If the inspector went to a mine, he never descended beyond the pit eye, unless there was a very serious accident for him to investigate. His constituents also complained of the stoppages made in wages. Threepence in the pound went towards the doctor or the "ground club", and with respect to the latter society, the collier could not get any relief from its funds unless he was either half starved or half dead. The hours of labour in North Wales were also excessive - twelve or thirteen hours a day. As for the rules being properly carried out, there was nothing of the sort attempted in his district.

Mr. R. Mitchell, of Barnsley, said that similar evils existed in the South Yorkshire district. Wages were arrested for the joint benefit of the coalowner and the doctor. One man who was injured got a week or two's pay, and then a certificate was sent by the doctor to the coal owner, stating that the man's pay must be arrested, inasmuch as the accident had formed into a slow fever. (Laughter). The educational clauses of the Act of Parliament had worked very beneficially in his district, because no boy under the age of twelve years could work in the pit. At Rawmarsh Colliery (the property of Messrs. Charlesworth) there was a strong union, and the men only worked eight hours, but they procured in that time more wealth for their employers, to the extent of 20 percent, and they also saved their own labour to the extent of twenty-five percent. (Hear). His constituents also complained of the "mottying system". Every tub or corf bore a token, corresponding with the number of a man's tools. If, in the opinion of the man stationed at the pit head, that tub or corf was not sufficiently filled, the miner below lost the whole value of that tub. The "motty" was left suspended on what the men called the "death board peg". In one colliery in his district, he believed it could be made out that at least 1,000 tons per annum were taken from the men in this way. (Hear, hear).

Mr. Silkstone, of the South Yorkshire district, furnished an interesting sketch of the mine in which he was employed. It belonged to the Messrs. Charlesworth, and was situated at Rawmarsh. In 1851 there were sixty-two lives lost in that pit; but under the improved system of management introduced there, and although it was a fiery seam, they had not had a man burnt for the last nine years. (Hear, hear). Again, although, as he had said, it was a fiery seam of coal, naked lights could be used, and that fact alone incontestably proved the good management which existed. During the last three years and a half they had drawn upwards of 1,000,000 tons without any loss of life. Throughout England, he believed, it was calculated that one life was lost for every 75,000 tons drawn. Moreover, at Rawmarsh, 2,000,000 tons had been drawn at the sacrifice of one life; and 2,500,000 tons with the loss of two lives. The pit was a union pit, the 500 men and boys employed in it being all members of the society; and during the last five years the colliery had not had five months of slack work. There had been no disturbances with the masters, but on the contrary; and yet this pit had passed through its five years probation of unionism with complete success. (Loud applause).

We have no space to record or even to indicate the remaining speeches made during the afternoon and evening. Suffice it to say that much valuable information on the condition of coal and ironstone workers in England was supplied, and that the importance of ventilation was not overlooked.

Wednesday.

The several sections appointed to consider the grievances of the colliers of England met this morning. In the law section the Chair was occupied by Mr. W. Crawford, of Wallsend, Mr. Hickman acting as secretary.

After a brief speech from the President of the section, in which he advocated an amendment of the Inspection Bill, of the weighing clauses, and of the educational system, and recommended that shorter hours of labour should be enforced.

Moses Price of West Bromwich, Staffordshire, suggested that the pits be worked on the stall system, and that the coal and ironstone be got by the ton by the men. He also thought that the Accident Club money should be done away with in the various fields of South Staffordshire, and that such moneys be left to the discretion of the miners themselves; that a better system of ventilation be adopted; and that an additional number of inspectors be employed. Further, that a horse road be driven in every pit; and that all the officials undergo a strict examination previous to their being engaged.

Mine Inspection.

Mr. M'Donald opened the discussion on this subject in a very able speech. What was required was that no powers be granted adverse to the law of the land, and that a strong protest should be uttered by that conference against special rules. There was no court of inquiry to which the inspector could be summoned, and they should have in the next Inspection Act a clause by which he could be punished at common law if he neglected his duty. (Hear, hear). They should also insist in any new legislation on the subject, that true weights, certified by the Weights and Measures Office should be placed at the pit head; that a place should be provided for the miner's man to stand on the bank to check the weighing; and that any breach of the law by the masters be punished by imprisonment, the same as John, the miner, was. The present system of fining the employers 1-0d. for any offence was a perfect farce.

Mr. W. Bennett, (South Staffordshire) said the men in his district had a great deal to contend with in respect of their mine inspector, Mr. Baker. There was a great neglect in respect of inspection. He thought that additional local inspectors ought to be appointed; that they should go through the different collieries every week, and make a monthly report to the Secretary of State.

The South Staffordshire delegates agreed in recommending that one inspector should be appointed to every 4,000 miners. Other speakers advocated the appointment of sixty sub-inspectors.

The powers of inspectors were next considered.

Mr. H.W. Banks, of Willenhall, suggested that the inspector should have the power to close any particular part of a pit, until any remedy he suggested to the employer had been carried out.

Mr. M'Donald stated that where the mine was truly dangerous, the inspector ought to have power to call in one mining engineer and the manager, and their decision, if not carried out by the owner within 18 hours, ought then to entail a penalty on the master of £50, or three months imprisonment with hard labour. No special rules ought to impose duties at variance with the spirit of the statute itself, for otherwise they would render nugatory Lord Campbell's Act.

At the afternoon sittings it was agreed to draw up a bill to be submitted to the conference, prior to any application to Parliament.

On Thursday, the question of ventilation and the constitution of juries was considered, and 20 cwt. only to the ton was insisted upon, and the business concluded by an expressed determination to seek compensation against masters where it could be proved that the accident was the result of carelessness on the part of masters, managers, or their deputies.

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Serious Accident at the Shireoaks Pits.

On Friday night a very serious accident occurred at the Shireoaks Pits, belonging to his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, resulting in the death of one man named Webster and the slight injury of two others. The men were at work, when a large quantity of soil fell upon them. An inquest was held on the body on Saturday, at the Shireoaks Inn, before C.S. Bunaby (?), Esq., coroner. Dr. Williams, of Worksop, said that a few slight scratches were all the injuries the body had received, and his opinion was that deceased had died of suffocation. The inquest was adjourned for the attendance of the Government Inspector.

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Clay Cross Cornish Pumping Engine.

Mr. William Howe, of Clay Cross, read, at the Institute of Mechanical Engineers, Birmingham, his paper, descriptive of the Cornish Pumping Engine, with wrought iron beams, and the pit-work, at Clay Cross Colliery. The engine is one of large size, erected for the drainage of the entire colliery at a single central pumping station, in place of a number of smaller pumps previously situated in different portions of the colliery, and most of them worked by the winding engines. The new engine is made powerful enough to allow of considerable future extension of the workings, having a cylinder of 84 inches diameter, and 10 foot stroke. The beam was constructed of wrought iron instead of cast iron, in consequence of the fatal accident at the Hartley Colliery by the breakage of the cast iron engine beam; it is composed of two large wrought iron slabs, each rolled solid in one piece 36 feet long, 7 feet deep in the centre, 2 inch thick throughout, the two slabs being securely braced together by strong cast iron distance pieces bolted between them, and a wrought iron plate connecting them at the bottom in the centre of the portion, which renders the beam thoroughly stiff laterally. The main centre gudgeon is fitted through a strong cast iron centrepiece, which has a turned boss at each end, fitted in bored holes in the wrought iron slabs; and large cast iron washer plates are fixed to the beam slabs and bored through for the bearings of the other gudgeons, which are keyed in; the entire beam weighs 32 tons. The pitwork consists of a lift pump at the bottom of the shaft, which is 418 feet deep, and two plunger pumps in the upper portion, all 18 inches diameter, and worked by the spears, which are of a very strong construction secured at the joints with wrought iron straps fixed by turn-bolts through bored holes. The quantity of water to be raised by the pumps fluctuates greatly at different seasons, and at the present time a slow speed of working the engine is sufficient to keep the colliery clear of water.

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Fatal Accident in a Coal Mine.

On Thursday an inquest was opened at the Old Workhouse Beerhouse, at Sleet Moor, in the parish of Alfreton, on the body of William Grice, of Sleet Moor, coal miner, aged 40 years, who died on Sunday, from injuries received in a coal mine belonging to W.P. Morewood, Esq., on the previous day from a fall of bind. The case was adjourned till Monday the 23rd. Two other men were seriously injured at the same time, and we understand that they are now progressing. The accident happened in the same pit as the one where the two men were drowned on the 30th. of October last, the inquest on whom is adjourned till the 23rd.

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 21st. November 1863.

Page 4 Col. 5

The Miners Conference in Leeds.

On Saturday, the general body of the delegates reassembled, Mr. M'Donald in the chair. Mr. Sheldon moved that all district unions be amalgamated, upon which an animated discussion ensued, it being felt by many impracticable, as members moving from one district to another having large funds, could not be admitted there without paying something in consideration. The chairman spoke from 25 years experience, when he said it would be possible to get a national fund applicable to local or district ruptures and emergencies. The motion of Mr. Sheldon was then carried. On the motion of Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Barker, it was agreed that the council be not expected to interfere in any local dispute, but that in any great emergency their advice may be sought and their opinions forwarded to all districts. Mr. Hickman then moved: - That the amounts collected be distributed only by the districts, and that a national labour and emergency fund be established, towards which each member of a district should pay one penny per week.

The motion was carried. The Revd. J.R. Stephens then submitted the following draft of the Eight Hours a Day and the Education of Boys Bill:-

Whereas it has been found that the working of boys of ten years of age in collieries is in many ways a grievous wrong to them, and further detrimental to the health and strength of the Empire, be it therefore enacted that from and after the day of , 186 , it should be unlawful for any boy below the full age of twelve years to be employed in any colliery, ironstone, or other mine whatever, in the United Kingdom of Great Britain. 2. Be it further enacted that no such boy shall be so employed with the certificate of birth, where ever procurable of the district registrar, or, where no such register can be obtained, without a medical certificate that he is of the appearance of a boy twelve years old. Also, that every such certified boy shall produce a certificate of a competent schoolmaster that he can read and write, and is versed in the first four rules of arithmetic. 3. Be it further enacted, that no boy between the age of twelve and fourteen, so employed, shall be permitted to work more than eight hours during any one day of twenty-four hours. 4. Be it further enacted, that any coalmaster or other mine proprietor violating the provisions of this Act by employing boys without the above certificate, shall, for every such offence, pay a penalty of not less than five pounds and not more than twenty pounds, and being committed a third time, he shall be imprisoned for not less than a month, and not more than three months; and any surgeon or registrar being convicted of giving a false certificate shall, for every such offence, pay a penalty of not less than five pounds, and not more than ten pounds, and if convicted of a third offence that he be imprisoned for not less than one month, and not more than three months; and that any parent or other person aiding or abetting in obtaining a false certificate shall pay a penalty of not less than two pounds, and not more than four pounds, and for a third offence shall be imprisoned not less than a month, and not more than three months.

The draft was agreed to, subject to revision by the executive conference, and the thanks of the conference were voted to Mr. Stephens for his services in preparing the document. In response the Revd. J.R. Stephens said: It is the proudest act of my life that I have the honour of preparing the draft of an eight hours Bill for boys of twelve years of age. I hope to live to see the day when either myself or someone more worthy will have the opportunity of preparing an eight hours Bill for men. (Hear). Mr. Mitchell then submitted a petition of the widows created by the Edmund's Main explosion. He said Mr. Sleight, barrister, had told him that the widows claims for compensation were well founded. If English miners had been accustomed to put the law in force,

there would have been no Hartley or Edmunds Main catastrophes. On the motion of Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Griffiths, it was resolved that the miners should take up this matter forthwith, and that a levy be made immediately for the support of the proceedings to be taken by the widows. Mr. Mitchell brought forward a case under the 23rd. section of the Mining Act. Mr. Platts, a coal-master in the Barnsley district, had refused to allow John Normansell to act as weighman. The employer had been convicted for so doing, but had appealed to the superior courts. It was resolved that the miners be requested to aid the cause of the weigher. Some of the delegated stated their belief that men were cheated in the districts to the extent of five shillings or ten shillings per month, owing to wrong weighing. After Mr. Hickman had stated that one of the recommendations from his section, with regard to the increase of the number of sub-inspectors, Mr. Crawford moved that one sub-inspector be appointed to every 4,000 miners. This proposition having been seconded, Mr. Miller proposed that the Executive council be instructed to draw a Bill to amend the Act for the Inspection of Mines, and that the number of sub- inspectors to be recommended be left for the consideration of the Council. Mr. Silkstone proposed that three sub-inspectors be appointed to every one of the twelve inspectors now appointed. On the vote being taken, 11 delegates supported Mr. Silkstone, 16 Mr. Miller, and 13 Mr. Crawford. Mr. Miller's motion, was, consequently, carried.

Complementary votes having been awarded to the chairman, the treasurer, the chaplain, and other officials, the proceedings of the conference terminated.

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 28th. November 1863.

Page 2 Col. 6

Sayer v. Langton.

The amount claimed was 11-9d. for coals. The plaintiff had taken the management of the Hasland Lane Colliery, as he could find no one to "recognise" it. Defendant said he was a partner in the colliery which had supplied the coals, and the plaintiff was a paid servant there. He was charging him for his own goods. If the money should be paid to anyone, it should be to the Dunston and Barlow Colliery Company. The plaintiff established his right to the amount, and his Honour ordered it to be paid forthwith.

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 28th. November 1863.

Page 3 Col. 1

Pit Accident at Alfreton, Derbyshire.

Two men drowned.

On Monday evening last, Mr. Busby, coroner, held an inquest (which had been adjourned from November the 6th.), at Alfreton, on the bodies of two colliers, named Charles Bradley and Samuel Calladine, who had been drowned by the bursting in of water into the Swanwick pit on the 30th. of October last. The inquest had been adjourned till the present time in consequence of the body of Calladine not being recovered for some time after the accident. The evidence, which was of considerable length, showed that the managers of the colliery had been apprehensive of danger from an old pit, full of water, which lay adjacent to their works. Accordingly, some eighteen months since, a pumping engine was erected by them, and the old workings pumped out until they appeared to be dry. Believing them (after as careful an inspection as possible) to be so, the workings of the Swanwick pit were driven close to the old levels, in order to obtain all the coal. On the 30th. of October, the two men deceased and another man named Staples were set to work boring for coal in No. 8 heading, close to the old workings. They had not been long at work when Bramley said, "Look, the side is pushing in", upon which they all three ran as fast as they could from the spot, knowing that the water was bursting in. Calladine took refuge in the first "bolt hole" the other two running on to the next. They had not been there above a minute when they were both washed out by the rush of water and carried along the workings. Staples, the man who was saved, states that he became insensible from foul air, and on coming to himself (a considerable time afterwards), he saw a light and was rescued by the exploring party. A few yards on was found the bruised and battered corpse of Bradley lying upon some rubbish where the water had carried him. The search for Calladine was postponed until the water could be pumped out, it being impossible to reach him. The bursting in of the water was observed immediately after its occurrence by the deputy, who was going to visit the deceased men at their work. He immediately sent all the men working in the pit to the surface, and had the old pit uncovered to promote ventilation in the breach. The search was resumed on the water being pumped out, and the body of Calladine was found by a collier in the old levels. He was "sitting on a piece of bind, with his head on his hands", and had probably mistaken his way to safety, and perished from black-damp. The jury found a verdict of "Accidental Death".

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 28th. November 1863.

Page 3 Col. 4.

Somercotes - Sudden Death from Overlifting.

On Monday last, an inquest was held at the Royal Tiger Inn, Somercotes, on the body of John Turner, coal miner, aged 16 years, who died on the 18th. instant. Deceased's father said that the deceased worked for Mr. Seely at Coates Park Colliery. About five weeks ago he complained of some injury he had received at the pit by slipping down on one of the iron plates. He worked a little the next day, but did not work afterwards, and soon afterwards took to his bed. Enoch Turner, deceased's brother, said he was with deceased in the pit, about five weeks ago, when deceased overlifted himself with lifting an empty tram on the rails, and he fell down shortly afterwards on his knee. John Senior Turner, surgeon, Alfreton, said that he had attended the case from the commencement. The boy died from pyoemia, a disease arising from inflammation of the veins. Matter is formed and carried with the blood in the circulation in different parts of the body. The deceased was very much injured in his knees from falling apparently against the rails. There was a large collection of matter in the cavity of the chest, in the cellular turren of the right arm, and in the left thigh. The inflammation arose from external products. Deceased told witness he had fallen forwards on something, and he had extended his arms and fallen on his knees. The jury returned a verdict to the effect, "That deceased died from pyoemia, arising from injuries accidentally received by falling on some iron plates".

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 28th. November 1863.

Page 3 Col. 4.

Staveley - Springwell Colliery.

Mr. Barrow, the proprietor of this colliery, has given notice that from Monday, 23rd. inst. "He will, during the winter months, give an advance of wages" to the coal hewers, on condition that, "work is not neglected on Mondays and Tuesdays". Those who do so are not to participate in the advance. It is understood that the rise will be 1d., 2d., and 3d., per ton, according to the part of the pit where the coal is got. The banksmen are also to have an advance of 2d. per day.

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 28th. November 1863.

Page 3 Col. 4.

Whittington - Colliery Accident.

On Tuesday last a man named William Silcock was dreadfully crushed between some loaded wagons, in the Whittington Company (late Pierce's) pit. He was immediately conveyed to the Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Hospital, where it was found that one of his right ribs was crushed in upon the lung, greatly injuring it, and also that his right thigh was broken and other injuries received. It was found necessary to perforate the skin of the chest, in order to allow respiration, which could not go on in a natural way. Later in the day, after a consultation, the orifice was enlarged, the lungs becoming congested. The poor man lingered until half past eleven on Wednesday morning, when he died. An inquest was held on Friday.

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 28th. November 1863.

Page 3 Col. 4.

Worksop - Pit Accident - Extraordinary Recklessness.

An adjourned inquest was held at Worksop on Monday, touching the death of Jesse Webster, who was killed by the fall of a quantity of earth on Friday, the 13th. inst. The Government Inspector, J. Hedley, Esq., was in attendance, also T. Tylden Wright, Esq., manager of the pits. John Stenton said the he, and George Lister, and the deceased, Jesse Webster, were at work in No. 8 road, making the road wide enough for a double road. When they had been working about half an hour, John Tingle, the foreman, came and asked them if they meant to be killed, as they were working without sprags. Webster answered he did not know, but if he was killed they would have spiced cake and ale and a slow walk to church. Lister and Webster were in partnership, and witness worked for them. Lister then told witness to get some sprags. He got one fixed under, and was putting up the second one, when the roof fell in. The accident was immediately after Tingle had warned them. They were working about 400 yards from the shaft. They knew it was a rule that sprags should be attended to, but it was not complied with that night. They had been at work a fortnight, and only had only used sprags the first night; the roof was so solid it would not come down without blowing. The day Webster was killed was the first day they had commenced on the opposite side. They were all three buried, and were not released until nearly two hours had elapsed. G. Lister, who walked with a crutch and a stick owing to injures received at the time, corroborated Stenton's evidence, and said they had been working some time on the opposite side without sprags, having sounded the place and considered it safe. After Tingle warned them witness said they had better put in sprags. Witness cut one, and told Webster he had better put one under his end. He had just begun to do so when the roof fell in, and partly buried them. Heard Webster groan two or three times, but believed he was soon dead. Did not think the accident would have occurred if the rule had been attended to. Had an ample supply of tools and timber. John Tingle gave evidence as to warning the men. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental Death".