

Report of the Commissioner Appointed under the Provisions of the Act 5 & 6 Vict. c.99, to inquire into the operation of that Act and into the state of the population in the mining districts.

105, Pall Mall, July 25th, 1844.

Sir,

On the 28th of November last you were pleased, in pursuance of the authority vested in you by the Act 5 and 6 Vic., c. 99, to nominate and appoint me to execute, as Inspector of Mines and Collieries, the duties pointed out by that Act. By your instructions, bearing date 14th December, I was required to proceed to Scotland and to other parts of the kingdom to ascertain and report to you the manner in which the provisions of the Act were observed; to take such steps as might be in my power to secure to the labourers employed in mines and collieries the benefits which have been guaranteed to them by Parliament; and to inquire into, and from time to time report upon, the general state and condition of the persons so employed.

My special attention having been called to several complaints that females were still at work in collieries and mines in Scotland; that in other parts of the kingdom wages continued to be paid in public houses; and that numerous other abuses, to remedy which the efforts of the legislature had been directed, remained unchecked, I now proceed to detail to you the steps taken by me up to this time to procure the due observance of the law, and to ascertain the general condition of that part of the population for whose protection it was designed.

My remarks will extend with more or less particularity to the parts of the Scotch coal-fields comprised in the Lothians, in Lanarkshire, in Stirling, Clackmannan, and Fifeshire, and to North and South Staffordshire.

SCOTLAND.

The Act of 5 and 6 Vic., c.99, prohibiting the employment of women and girls in mines and collieries, regulating the employment of boys, and making other provisions relating to persons working therein, was passed on 10th August, 1842. In order in some degree to afford time for preparing for the change, it allowed female apprentices under the age of 18 to continue at their usual occupation below ground for three months, and all other females for six months. Accordingly it was not until the 1st of March, 1843, that, it became unlawful for any owner of any mine or colliery "to employ any female person whatsoever within any mine or colliery, or to allow or permit any female person to work or be therein."

The common practice in Scotland had been that the females were not employed immediately by the proprietors, but by the men. The proprietors, therefore, of those mines in which females had been in the habit of working, published notices of the Act, and called upon their work-people to conform to its provisions. This was possible in some works without occasioning much expense to the proprietor; in others a considerable outlay was rendered necessary for the purpose of heightening the road-ways, and so preparing them, as to enable men or horses to draw the coal from the spot where it was worked, to the bottom of the shaft up which it was to be drawn. But notwithstanding these preparations, the difficulty experienced by the workpeople, in altering their habits to meet the change thus forced upon them, and by the females in obtaining employment elsewhere, was such that for some months the Act was very imperfectly attended to. Some proprietors had tacitly permitted the women to return to the pits after they had been excluded; others had abstained from dismissing them at all. In many, therefore, of the more important coal works in Scotland, the practice of employing females below ground, a practice which the legislature, having in view the real and permanent interests of those engaged in mining labour, had sought to abolish, was

continued up to the commencement of the present year. On the 3rd of January I addressed a circular letter to all the proprietors or managers of works, apprizing them of my intention to visit them officially within a short period, for the purpose of ascertaining and reporting to the Secretary of State for the Home Department the manner in which the provisions of the Act were observed. I also ventured to bespeak their co-operation towards giving full effect to a law humanely designed for the protection and benefit of so large a section of the working classes.

On reaching Scotland about the latter end of that month, I had the satisfaction of finding that the intimation conveyed in that letter had been favourably received, and that much progress had been made in removing the females from those works in which they had been allowed to remain longest; and before I left that country, in the beginning of April, I felt no doubt that the practice of employing females in mining labour below ground had, as a system, been abandoned. Some few women may possibly go down by stealth, where the mines are accessible by means of stairs ; but the strongest assurances were given to me, both by owners and managers, that they would continue to use every exertion to keep the practice in check, and to cause it to be finally abandoned altogether. The few who may still, for a time, persevere in their endeavour to obtain work in this way are those of mature or advanced age, who have been so long accustomed to labour in the pits that they are little suited to anything else. And it is upon these chiefly that the provisions of the Act have fallen with great severity. If they are able-bodied, they have, by the usages of Scotland in regard to the treatment of the poor, no claim on the parish fund for relief; and the small assistance they may receive from their late employers, or from their neighbours, falls far short of what they had been in the habit of earning at labour which, however objectionable in other respects, had at least afforded them for many years the means of decent subsistence and comfort. The usage of Scotland in refusing all relief from the parochial funds to the able-bodied rests on the presumption that every such person can find employment, - a presumption which, in the case of this class of females, is far from being sustained by the fact. In a country where female labour is in excess, and where large numbers of women were suddenly displaced from their usual occupations, and thrown upon the general market in search of new spheres of industry, the last to meet with success in the more crowded race of competition will naturally be those who had grown up to maturity in the dull routine of dragging or carrying heavy burdens in the coal pits. Accordingly, in all parts of the coal districts where women had been employed, complaints were numerous of the hardships that the Act had occasioned to elder females, widows, orphan daughters of mature age, families where there were no sons to aid a father who was old or ailing; and other similar cases. All these were assisted by the proprietors, and others their neighbours, to a certain extent, but they were still exposed to privations. Their case merits particular sympathy, inasmuch as they have been deprived of their former means of livelihood on moral grounds, and with a view to moral results, which concern the rising and future generations far more than they can be supposed to influence themselves. Their numbers, however, in connection with each mine, are not great, and are gradually decreasing. As long as any remain unemployed, they will be tempted to endeavour to resume their former work in the pits; but the vigilance of the public prosecutors (procurators fiscal) in each locality will, it is to be hoped, maintain the general observance of the law, which may already be said to have had the effect of abolishing, as a system, the employment of female labour in the mines of Scotland.

The manner in which the rest, forming the great majority of the females who worked under ground when the Act passed, have accommodated themselves to the change, is various. The married women stay at home and attend to their domestic duties. Out of the large number of those whom I questioned upon the subject I found very few who did not rejoice in the change, and confess that even in a pecuniary point of view it had been attended with little or no loss to them. Considering how large a portion of the earnings of a married woman who had a large family, and who worked in the pits, went to pay a person for attending to her house and children in her absence, and

considering also the consequent discomfort of her home, and the unsteadiness of the husband which it frequently occasioned, all the most intelligent among them expressed themselves well pleased with the alteration. In those families where the daughters had been in the habit of assisting their fathers in the mine, and had not yet succeeded in obtaining other work, the loss of that assistance was much felt in the diminished income of the family, unless there were boys or young men to supply their place. Some of the unmarried had, in default of other means of earning their livelihood, received employment on the pit banks; but as a sufficient number of females were already so engaged, it had been necessary to divide the work between the new hands and the old, the latter suffering, consequently, in diminished wages, to the amount often of a half, by the additional number of hands suddenly brought into competition with them. Others had obtained occasional work in the fields, during the busy seasons of the year. The information given in all the different works leads me to believe that a fair proportion of the whole have found permanent occupation, either in domestic or farm service, or in various other branches of industry, and that the amount of suffering, which was undoubtedly severe at the first application of the Act, has already been greatly diminished. Many proprietors, wishing to aid the younger females in preparing themselves for the change, afforded them facilities for learning reading, writing, and the use of the needle, and a little of common household work, at schools established in their neighbourhood. When the practice of using female labour in the pits has once been generally interrupted, it will be as difficult to induce females in Scotland to return to such a kind of labour as it would be to introduce it into any mining district where it has never existed. A large proportion of the men approve of the alteration, and are become interested in the exclusion of the women. Nearly all the proprietors have already adapted their works to meet the change, and there is every probability that all workings, hereafter to be opened, will be similarly constructed. This change, from the rude and imperfect mode of working by aid of female, to the present effectual one by men or horses, has been brought about in most cases at a moderate cost, which will be replaced in no very long time by the superior efficiency of the labour. The general result, therefore, according to the evidence which I subjoin, appears to be that the displacement of female labour from the mines of Scotland has been effected, not indeed without some temporary suffering, but with less than was anticipated; and that the ultimate consequence of the change will be eminently beneficial to all engaged in mining labour; a wise consideration for whose best interests was the chief motive which recommended so important a change to the legislature.*

(*Since the above remarks were written, the fiscals of **Falkirk** and **Alloa** have found it necessary to commence proceedings against the proprietors of the **Redding** and the Clackmannan Collieries. I have also been in communication with the procurator fiscal of Lanarkshire on the subject of some alleged contraventions of the Act in that county. There is every reason to expect that the law in its present state will be found sufficient to reach those who violate it.)

I proceed to illustrate these positions by referring to evidence relating to the particular districts visited, and to offer some remarks upon the general state and condition of the people in each.

THE LOTHIANS.

The parish of **Newton** in Mid-Lothian is one which has experienced perhaps rather more than the average amount of inconvenience from the change. The minister of that parish, the **Rev. J. Adamson**, obligingly furnished me with the following details:-

"The population of the parish, by the census of 1841, was 1743. The collier population, including the artisans connected therewith, may amount to about 1100. The operation of the Act, excluding female labour, has for the time materially affected the well-being of their families, however

beneficial it may be in the end, and especially has proved a sore grievance to females somewhat advanced in life, and who have no near relatives to assist them. The number of females whom the Act affected may amount to about 180, of whom 61 were married. Their remaining at home, though it may diminish the income of, must be a great benefit to, the family in respect of comforts and the care of the children. Of the remaining 119, only 49 have obtained permanent employment, - 10 in factories, and the remainder as domestic servants. There are 70 who remain unemployed, except, when work is partially to be obtained with the farmer ; but being unacquainted with it, and there being a plentiful supply of labourers otherwise, not much work of this kind is to be obtained, and that only through the summer season. Of the 70 a certain proportion are young people from nine years and upwards, not yet fit for any other employment than that to which they had been put, of assisting their mothers or other relations in carrying the coals from the "hew," as it is called, to the pit bottom. The remainder consists of those who have not yet succeeded in obtaining service, and of others who, from their being advanced in years, never will be so engaged, and upon whom therefore the Act, as excluding them from the only labour for which they were fit, without any provision or compensation being made, falls with a peculiar severity; since, being still able to work, if work could be obtained, they are not entitled to parochial relief by the law of Scotland."

From this and other sources of inquiry in the parish, I am led to conclude that if from the 70 above named as unmarried, and still out of employ, a fair deduction be made for those who can be maintained by the earnings of their fathers and brothers, though not without difficulty, until they are able to find work for themselves, not more than 40 of the 180 (or between a fourth and a fifth of the whole) are subjected at present to severe privation by the operation of the Act. Some of these unquestionably are suffering greatly, having been reduced from a position in which they could feed and clothe themselves in comfort and decency, to the necessity of resorting to the most humiliating employments, such as collecting manure on the roads, &c. The minister of the parish mentioned two instances which may be taken as representing the difficulties to which many of the same class must have been exposed.

"The daughters, of the ages of 49 and 40 respectively (of a father aged 75), have been left to shift for themselves, and have had recourse to making and vending camstone (a kind of white clay used for washing the earthen and stone floors of houses), since they cannot hope to be received as domestic servants, after having been for so long a period nothing better than beasts of burden. In this occupation, when the weather admits of their going abroad, they make on an average about three pence a day, and to do this they have sometimes to travel as far as Haddington, a distance of 14 miles."

According to statements furnished me by the managers of the seven principal works in East and Mid Lothian, in which women were employed when the Act passed (exclusive of the parish of Newton), the number of females employed by them at the passing of the Act was 227, of whom 158 were either married and supported by their husbands, or had got permanent employment. If, from the remaining 59, a fair proportionate deduction be made, as above, for those who are assisted or temporarily maintained by their relatives, rather less than the number before given, or about one-fifth of the whole, will remain, who may be considered as thrown by the Act into a state of privation. I had opportunities of seeing many of these in my visits with the managers or proprietors to the various works. They were anxious to relate their simple tale of distress consequent on their enforced idleness, and to testify their anxiety to get work. Their scanty dress, and general aspect of depression, sufficiently showed that, notwithstanding the helping hand of charity which had been held out to them by their late employers, they felt severely the change that had struck them suddenly with the deprivation of the means of living to which they had been accustomed from their childhood.

In West Lothian (Linlithgowshire) very few females were ever employed below ground ; in the immediate neighbourhood of **Bo'ness** there were about 40, chiefly in the employ of **Mr. J. and Mr. G. Cadell**. They informed me that they had ceased to permit them to go down. The same assurance was given me by **Mr. Webster**, the manager of the adjoining work. It was stated that many of the females displaced had failed to procure employment. There was but little demand for female labour in that neighbourhood. The decayed and neglected appearance of many of the colliers' habitations in and near Bo'ness, showed it to be a place eminently in want of external assistance.

Although it is impossible not to lament the individual hardship which has accompanied a measure designed for the public good, it is satisfactory to be able to state, that many even of those who were suffering from it, and every father and mother with a young family among the large numbers depending on mining labour, with whom I conversed upon the subject, in all parts of the district, willingly allowed the good effects it had borne already, and would in time most abundantly produce. A mother of four children, at **Pencaitland Colliery**, said -

"While working in the pit I was worth to my husband 7s. a week, out of which we had to pay 2s. 6d. to a woman for looking after the younger bairns. I used to take them to her house at 4 o'clock in the morning, out of their own beds, to put them into her's. Then there was 1s. a week for washing ; besides, there was mending to pay for, and other things. The house was not guided. The other children broke things; they did not go to school when they were sent; they would be playing about, and got ill-used by other children, and their clothes torn. Then when I came home in the evening, everything was to do after the day's labour, and I was so tired I had no heart for it; no fire lit, nothing cooked, no water fetched, the house dirty, and nothing comfortable for my husband. It is all far better now, and I wouldna' gang down again."

William Moffot, a collier at **Newbattle**, aged 73, had been 66 years at work in the pits, said-

"In a wee while the women would not hear of going down if they were asked. Those men whose wives went down were worse off with more money. When the wife went down, the children turned out worse for it. They were left, to a stranger and sure to be neglected. A stranger would not manage them like their mother, so as to bring them up properly. They would be mischievous, or careless, and break everything, and help themselves to everything, and would not go regularly to school. How could they be expected to go to school if the mother was not at home to look after them? I never let my wife or daughters work in the pit."

The tenor of all the evidence I met with on this part of the subject is to the same effect. One man, who had a large family, said, " *As a father, I was glad the women were not to go down any more.*" Another " *Was now sure his children would be well brought up.*" Another thought " *It would be good for the growing girls not to have gone down.*" A mother said " *she wished the Act had passed 50 years since ; she should have escaped the sair slavery.*" Another, " *that it was good the women were out of the pits; they will now look after their children, and it will be better for themselves and their husbands.*"

That many young females, who had earned good wages in well-regulated collieries by working with their own relatives, should regret the change by which they have suffered, is no more than natural, especially as they were so ill prepared for it by education and previous habits. The beneficial effect of some previous preparation, and of the active interest taken in the welfare of the females displaced, is strikingly shown in the Marquis of Lothian's collieries. The manager, **Mr. J. Gibsone**, states -

"We had intended to take the women out of the pits before the Act passed. A year before that time we erected a washing house to teach them to wash and get up linen; we paid a woman to teach them, and supplied her with materials. We have also two sewing schools in the colliers' village, and two other schools near. The cost of education in both is covered by a small addition to the cottage rents; the surplus being paid over to a fund for charitable purposes, connected with the colliery. We had 60 females in the pits. I have got between 20 and 30 of these into the paper mills at Newbattle ; and several either into domestic or farm service. There remain only about six grown-up females idle; some of them are fit for nothing, and are supported by the parish; the rest are assisted by the colliery fund."

Mr. David Forster, manager of the Earl of Stair's colliery (**Oxenford**) provided schooling for girls removed from the pits. Mr. Forster states,-

"We had 40 females in the pits when the Act passed. We have found employment in service for some, and occasional work for others. Some are supported by their fathers and brothers, who are earning fair wages. Some are the daughters or wives of men who from age or infirmity cannot earn full wages, or of idle men who will not. Our worst cases are those of four families supported by the boys only, who earn about six shillings a week, the daughters having previously, since the death of the fathers, been able to add to the income of the family by working in the pits."

The females employed in the collieries of Sir John Hope, Bart., were sent to school by the heritors of the parish and Sir John Hope, to learn sewing, having been previously taught to read and write; the sewing school was said to have been the means of getting many into service.

Among the arguments by which the measure of removing the females from the pits had been originally supported, a very prominent one was, that it would cause only a temporary inconvenience, and a very slight expense to the capitalists or proprietors who worked the pits, and that the alteration would not affect the rate of wages or enhance the price of coal to the consumer.

This anticipation has been fully borne out by the fact. I believe I may state that it was almost universally allowed that the cost, whatever it was, having been once incurred, the work of drawing the coals went on with greater regularity and more satisfactorily, as being under better control than before.

The largest sum which I heard had been rendered necessary was at the Marquis of Lothian's collieries, where it exceeded £1000, which the manager, however, considered to have been well laid out. He stated that he had found that the cost of working the coal was the same per ton without the women as with them, and the substitution of horse labour was a favourable change for the master. The rate of wages had fallen throughout the district; but this was occasioned by other and totally distinct causes, to be hereafter referred to. If in some works the gross amount of earnings had been reduced, in others I was assured that, in consequence of the overloaded state of the market, the men would not have been able to earn more since the passing of the Act, had they been able to employ females as formerly.

Several complaints were made to me by proprietors who had faithfully conformed to the Act, that in a few mines on the verge of the Mid-Lothian coal-field females were still employed.

This was naturally, though perhaps erroneously, represented as an unfair advantage taken by those proprietors who violated the law over those who adhered to it. It was also a source of irritation to as many of the work-people as had been compelled to submit to the suffering occasioned by the

change, to find that elsewhere others were permitted with impunity to continue at their usual work in the pits. The mines in question are upon the edge-seams, which have been hitherto worked by means of bearers, chiefly women, who carry the coal on their backs up ladders or stairs to the surface, or to the bottom of a shaft. The number of works of this kind in the district does not exceed four or five, employing, at the passing of the Act, about 100 females of all ages. The proprietors or their agents informed me that they had taken steps for removing the females so engaged as soon as the Act passed ; and that if some of them took advantage of the means of access by the stairs, it was entirely without their knowledge and against their express orders.

At the works of Sir George Clerk, one of the Secretaries of Her Majesty's Treasury, I examined some of the persons employed, and obtained unequivocal testimony that females had been on that day, and with scarcely any intermission from October last, at work in the pit. Their names and those of the men for whom they worked were given to me. I placed the evidence in the hands of the sheriff of Edinburghshire, who undertook to follow up the investigation in the usual manner, and, if evidence sufficiently corroborative of the above statements could be adduced, to prosecute the case to a conviction. I had reason to believe that also at Mr. Mercer's pits at Dryden, and at the Rev. J. Beresford's at Macbiehill, females were in the habit of working under ground. I received from both these gentlemen and from Sir George Clerk the strongest assurances that arrangements would be made and renewed vigilance exercised to prevent any further breach of the law.

The clause prohibiting boys under 10 years of age from working below ground is, I have reason to think, observed as strictly as under the circumstances can be expected. The stunted growth of many of the children of colliers makes it difficult for managers of mines to satisfy themselves of the age of a boy with respect to whom they may entertain a doubt, and certificates of age required by many proprietors are not always to be obtained. At the same time, the inducement is not great in this district to take boys below at an earlier age than 10. All the proprietors with whom I communicated expressed their anxiety to cause this portion of the Act to be attended to, and informed me of the measures they had taken for the purpose.

Notwithstanding the partial, and it is to be hoped only temporary, suffering occasioned by these changes, the great majority of the labouring colliers and their families, as has been before observed, appeared to regard them favourably, and to appreciate the benevolent intentions of the legislature. It was satisfactory to them to feel that the attention of Her Majesty's Government had been especially directed towards them, and that a careful consideration had been given to what concerned intimately their interests and welfare. Their welfare, in its highest sense, will indeed be greatly promoted by the exclusion of females from the pits, and by the other regulations adverted to. But there is much that is wrong in the general circumstances of their condition, which these regulations do not reach - much that Acts of Parliament cannot deal with, because lying beyond the province of all legitimate legislative interference; and which must be cured, if at all, by the wisdom and benevolence of employers, seconded by the active virtues, the self-command, and the intelligence of the work-people themselves.

In considering the state of the collier population in this district, it must be borne in mind that the system of predial slavery, so long extinguished in the rest of the kingdom, existed, as regards the colliers and salters of Scotland, in full vigour down to 1775, and was not finally abolished until the very recent period of 1799. The preamble of the Act 15th Geo. III., c. 28 (1775), recited that -
"Whereas by the statute law of Scotland, as explained by the judges of the courts of law there, many colliers and coal-bearers and salters are in a state of slavery and bondage, bound to the collieries or salt-works where they work for life, transferable with the collieries and saltworks, &c.; and whereas the emancipating and setting free the said colliers, &c., who are now in a state of

servitude, gradually, and upon reasonable conditions, and the preventing others coming into such a state of servitude, would be the means of increasing the number of colliers, &c., to the great benefit of the public, without doing injury to their present masters, and would remove the reproach of allowing such a state of servitude to exist in a free country." It was enacted, "*That all those who were colliers at the passing of the Act should become free on certain conditions, and under certain regulations, at periods varying from three to ten years, according to their ages; and that no person who, after the passing of the Act, should begin to work as a collier, should be bound in any way different from what was permitted by law with regard to other servants or labourers."*

This Act, however, not having been effectual, it was followed by the 39 Geo. III., c. 56, which declared that many colliers and coal-bearer's still continue in a state of bondage from not having complied with the provisions, or from having become subject to the penalties of the Act above recited ; and it. was therefore enacted, "*That from and after the passing of this Act, all the colliers in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, who were bound colliers at the time of the passing of this Act, shall be and are hereby declared to be free from their servitude."*

Thus, until the passing of this Act in 1799, "many colliers and coal-bearers," to use the words of the Act, " still continued in a state of bondage;" attached to the soil, and unable to transfer their labour without permission of their master. Some old people, male and female, in various parts of the district, acknowledged to me that this was the condition under which they worked during many years of their youth. The childhood of many men who are still able-bodied colliers must have been passed while their parents were in a state of slavery, or very shortly after they were relieved from that state. A position so degraded, as compared with their free fellow subjects, must of itself have kept them apart from the rest of the community. The situation and state of their dwellings, their ordinary habits and mode of life, must have tended to perpetuate this separation. They had been long habituated to mix only with each other, and to intermarry with no other class, until they might be said almost to have become a caste. The custom of working their females in the pits powerfully increased this tendency to insulation, inasmuch as the collier, choosing his wife not for her domestic qualities, but for her powers of enduring hard and unnatural toil below ground, could find no female of any other class of life ready and willing to conform to such habits. Thus a peculiar character and tone of mind appears to have grown up, and still to adhere to them. Having little intercourse with other classes, they are suspicious and prejudiced; seldom possessing much more than the mere rudiments of common instruction, they are without the information necessary to enable them to form sound judgments on many matters which concern them, and which they are fond of interfering with and endeavouring to regulate. Kept so long, by law and habit, as a class apart, they have known little of that sort of regard and attention that seeks their good on principle, and without interested motives. Conversing and contriving only with each other, they very readily surrender their confidence to persons of their own rank and class, and in general most slowly and reluctantly to any one else.

Their habits and manners have partaken of the improvement of the age. Acts of violence and outrage which, in times past, made them somewhat formidable neighbours, are now rare. Their addiction to cruel sports lingers only, I believe, in a few of the most neglected villages. In some localities they have remained pretty stationary, satisfied with and attached to their employers ; steady at their work, and open to reason on any matter which may call for explanation. But the increase in the demand for coal of late years, consequent on the progress of population, trade, and commerce, has caused new works to be opened or old ones to be enlarged, and a new demand for hands to arise. This has encouraged a migratory disposition on the part of many of the colliers, to the weakening of such of the old bonds of local attachment as still remained. The houses provided to meet this increase of the collier population have been for the most part built like the old colliery

villages, in long rows, in the midst, perhaps, of the open fields, and apart from the rest of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Thus thrown together, without adequate pastoral or any other superintendence, often without habitual intercourse with any one bearing the authority of superior mind or superior example to advise, direct, or control them, their clannish feelings and ideas would naturally be perpetuated and strengthened. The power of agitators or mistaken advisers must be promoted by having to deal with masses of people so concentrated; and being able at some works to refer to a few real, and at all to many imaginary grievances, it cannot be a matter of surprise that they should have succeeded in establishing their influence over a large number of followers.

The colliers' earnings have declined of late years in this district from various causes, partly general, partly the result of their own misapprehension of their real interests. The general causes have been:- 1. The opening of new sources of supply of coal to the Edinburgh market, by the extension of railways, &c., which has reduced the price of coal, and consequently wages also. 2. The check given to the export trade by the tariff of 1842. The causes of reduced wages for which the colliers are responsible are - 1. The strikes. The effect of these has been to compel the master to bring new hands into the trade, who compete with the old; a process which naturally results in depressing wages. Strikes had also, in a remarkable manner, interfered with the amount of exported coal before the imposition of the tariff; and had moreover caused English coal to be brought to Scotland, where it has since kept its ground to the exclusion of a certain quantity of Scotch coal. 2. Their own regulations as to the quantity of work to be done in a day ; the irregularity with which they work ; and their habits of intemperance and self-indulgence. A minister of one of the mining parishes thus described their present condition:-

"For many years the income of the collier population far exceeded that of the agricultural, without increasing in a corresponding degree, in the great majority of cases, either their comfort or respectability, since it was too often spent in sensual indulgence and idleness. Now that it is reduced to nearly the same level, partly from the female labour being unproductive in the way it has been hitherto, and the earnings of the men at the same time being very considerably lessened, they feel its effects very sadly, as will ever be the case where a very material diminution of income has occurred within a short period, and before the parties have learnt to accommodate themselves to their altered circumstances."

The very natural struggle against this decline in their pecuniary resources is a prominent cause of the movement which is now in progress among them. Delegates from the "Miners' Association" have for some months past been engaged in urging them to join that body. It is understood that many of the Lothian colliers have already become members, either openly or covertly, and subscribe to its funds. The whole of the men at one considerable work, after resisting the solicitations of the delegates since October last, joined, as I was informed by the proprietor, in February. The professed object of the combination is, by limiting the supply, to reduce the stocks on hand, and having thus forced up prices, to keep them at the higher level; and as the decline of wages is attributed by the men to the overstocking of the market by the excessive competition of the masters, they call upon the latter to aid them in this project. Even were the improvement of the condition of the collier unattainable by any other means, a combination of this kind against the public interests could be entitled to very little sympathy. But it is obviously impossible to effect any such combination. Of the extent to which the attempt has been made, of its consequences, and of the general proceedings of the Miners' Association, I shall have occasion to speak in another place.

With their endeavours to bring about an increase of wages by these erroneous means, they also combine more sensible efforts to remove practical grievances.

One of the most manifest of these is the practice prevalent in some collieries of obliging the men to give over-weight, varying from 21 cwt. to 24 cwt., and even more in some cases, to the ton. Although this is only a mode of reducing wages, it is always regarded by the collier as arbitrary and oppressive. Competition among the masters will induce some of them to force a trade by offering a certain quantity above the usual weight for a given price; and just so much as the master increases this boon to his customer he compels the collier to add to his day's labour. It may be possible that without this bribe to the customer the master might lose his custom, and the collier his employment in supplying him ; but if, instead of finding the amount of his day's task suddenly augmented, the collier were clearly informed of the precise extent of the reduction of his day's wages which his employer deemed it necessary to enforce, the transaction would be more clear, and the temptation to any hasty, or perhaps in some instances, fraudulent, curtailment of the collier's earnings diminished. The manager of one of the works, in which the excess above the legal weight required from the collier is the smallest, thus expressed himself upon the subject:-

"If colliers were to be paid for net weight, the rates per ton paid to them when giving overweight would be lowered. For instance, I believe that at present they give about 22 cwt. for a ton on an average; and supposing that they have for this 1s. 10d., then an equivalent prise for a ton of 20 cwt. would be 1s. 6d. But the advantage attending net weight is that a fairer, more honourable, and straightforward system of dealing would obtain between the master and workmen, and a fruitful source of dissatisfaction and bad feeling, so often existing, would be removed."

Defective ventilation was a common topic of complaint at many of the works. At most of the more extensive ones, in the hands of the large landed proprietors, I believe that all is done that skill can suggest to keep up a proper supply of pure air. The Northumberland system of ventilation is practised in many cases. At the collieries of Mr. Wardlaw Ramsay of Whitehill, the draft of the up-cast shaft is conducted into the chimney of the steam engine, by which the current is said to be accelerated. Every attention is paid to ventilation in the works of his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch, in those of the Marquis of Lothian, of Lord Stair, of the trustees of Mr. Dundas of Arniston, of Sir J. Hope and others. The outlay required to effect a proper ventilation of the mine is said to be amply repaid by the greater steadiness with which the work can be carried on. Mr. Nesbitt of the Elphinstone Colliery stated that since they had adopted a proper system of supplying pure air, their works went on without being subject to interruptions. Considerations of humanity towards the collier are, in the matter of properly ventilating the mine, in most instances strictly reconcilable with the direct interests of the employer. It is therefore to be regretted that the benefits arising from it are still overlooked at some works. The consequences are, that the tendencies to the peculiar diseases of the miner are greatly increased, of which I had opportunities of seeing many lamentable examples; and the works themselves are liable to frequent stoppages whenever the temperature above ground approximates to that below. It appears reasonable to expect that the growing attention already directed to this subject, and an increasing sense of the humane regard due to the working collier, will have the effect of reducing the number of those works where the prevalence of bad air exposes the labourer to the loss of his health at an early age, and his family to suffering and destitution. Every instance of improvement in this important particular removes a cause of just complaint. In the mean time, at the first symptom of the revival of the coal trade in that district, it will be in the power of any good and steady workman, on giving the usual fortnight's notice, to leave an ill-ventilated work, and to find ready employment in one which is free from that source of evil. This has already been the effect of the improvements hitherto made. As a general rule, the men of best character and conduct are found at the best regulated works.*

(* The mode of circulating pure air, adopted in the deep mines in Cornwall by means of small channels formed of boards laid along the levels, might be found applicable in some of the Scotch collieries, where the evil to be contended against is not the influx of noxious gases, but simply the

consumption of air by breathing, and by the lights, &c. Air-pumps, worked at very little expense, either by the engine or by hand, are also in use in the Cornish mines for the same purpose. The views of Dr. Arnott and Dr. Reid in regard to the ventilation of Mines are of great value.)

The other grievances refer chiefly to excessive fines for sending up stone mixed with coal, or small coal mixed with large, or for other departures from the regulations of the colliery; monthly or fortnightly instead of weekly payments, and objections to being paid on other days except Saturday; objections to the mode of weighing the coal by the steel-yard, instead of by the beam and scales; complaints of frequent mistakes and omissions in accounting to the men for the actual weight of coal sent up by them; complaints of inadequate payments for work done, which resolve themselves simply into questions of wages according to the current price of labour.

All these complaints, wherever they exist, would seem to be capable of very easy adjustment by frank and mutual explanations between the men and their employers.

It cannot be imagined that the masters would wantonly seek to impose heavy fines upon their men. It unfortunately may happen that the frequent misconduct of some men, at some works, may have occasioned the fines to be increased, smaller ones having been found ineffectual; and that in the application of a general rule the large fine may sometimes fall heavily on a man of steady conduct, for some accidental or occasional transgression. But a spirit of mutual good understanding is so desirable for both parties, that it cannot be deemed probable that any employer would habitually inflict higher fines than he found indispensable to maintain his lawful authority; still less that, under the cloak of imposing necessary fines, he would take advantage of his power to deprive his labourer of any part of his just earnings. The practice of paying monthly or fortnightly, or on some other day rather than Saturday, is defended, in the cases where it exists, by its alleged effect in lessening the temptations to dissipation, and promoting steadier habits. A just confidence in the integrity of employers and their agents prevents complaints regarding weights from being common. Whenever they are made, permission is usually given to the men to place a superintendent of their own to inspect the process of weighing. Matters of detail of this nature can never be long a subject of disquietude between employer and employed where each party is actuated by a proper spirit.

But there are many circumstances injuriously affecting their lot, of which they do not complain, which nevertheless, did they appear to them in their true proportions, would assume a prominent place in their thoughts.

In many parts of the district the state of the old colliery houses must exercise a very prejudicial influence on their habits. Like the common cottage of the Scotch agricultural labourer, it is rather a hovel than a cottage, having nothing but the ground floor. Some consist of only one, others of two rooms, from 10 to 14 feet square each. Many of the older ones have no ceiling: vacancies in the roof let in the wind and rain, and the floor is damp, being often little more than the natural ground. No domestic care could give an appearance or a feeling of comfort to habitations such as these. New and better ones are gradually taking their place. It is no more than an act of justice to men who are confined to the impurities of the mines for nearly half their existence, that they should enjoy pure air and good dwellings during their hours of repose. But too many of the old still remain, powerfully aiding, by their discomfort and their dirty and crowded state, to break down the domestic habits and character of the population.

The new cottages have been in almost every instance built on the same principle of arrangement as the old, in long rows, sometimes forming two or three sides of a square. In a country where, as in England, habits of cleanliness are identified with the proper pride and self-respect of the people,

rows of dwellings, such as those inhabited by the colliers in Northumberland and Durham, or in North Staffordshire, are not so inimical to cleanliness and decency. But where, as in Scotland, cleanly habits have yet to be formed in that class, the effect of crowding people together in long rows of hovels is to encourage and perpetuate dirt and discomfort. I went into a great number of the colliers' cottages with the agents or managers of the different works in the Lothians; and I am compelled to say that a very large majority of the families of that class exhibit, in their own person and in the state of their children and houses, so marked a disregard of cleanliness as must place them, in that particular, very low in the scale of civilized beings. The interior of a dirty colliers' house must be utterly repulsive to any decent labouring man or woman belonging to any other occupation ;- the furniture out of order and neglected, the floor black with dirt, the bedclothes nearly of the same colour. By the strange infatuation of a deep-rooted and nearly universal prejudice, the collier believes that it weakens him to wash his back. The consequence is, that not one collier in 500 *ever* washes his whole person, unless he may chance to have opportunities of bathing in summer, to which, by the bye, he does not attribute any ill effects, though he fears injury from using water to his back in the common process of washing. The collier, as a general rule, when he comes home from his day's labour, as black from head to foot as the coal he has been working, sits down on a stool before the fire and washes his face, neck, and breast, his arms and his shoulders, and his legs up to his knees, - often not so far; he washes his head on Saturdays. The whole of the rest of his person remains untouched by water: I found, during casual visits to their cottages from time to time after the hours of labour, some hundreds of men in the act of washing; the backs of every one of them were quite black, and every one gave the same reason in the same words for not washing his back, namely, "*that it would weaken it.*" The universality of this habit was allowed by all the managers and persons in authority whom I questioned upon the subject. Such habits of dirt and neglect must have greatly contributed to keep the colliers a separate race, apart from the rest of the labouring classes, and to perpetuate the disadvantage of such insulation. There can be no doubt of its injurious consequences to their health, especially of its increasing their liability to those distressing internal complaints to which so many of them fall an early sacrifice. The exterior also of a collier village too often presents features as unfavourable as the interior of the cottages themselves. Immediately outside the doors, up to the very threshold, every species of repulsive filth is scattered or collected. It is painful to witness the total want which seems to prevail of a proper sense of many points of common decency (far more than is exhibited by many nations whom we are accustomed to call savage); placing, in this respect, the habits of the human being scarcely above those of the lower animals. One of the first objects which the collier should aim at, in his efforts to improve his condition, should be to establish habits of cleanliness, both in his own person, in his house, and his children, as being the first element in creating proper self-respect, and in conciliating towards himself more of the sympathy and regard of all other classes. The exclusion of the females from the pits is the first great step towards raising the standard of domestic habits, and securing for the collier the decency and comforts of a respectable home. It is also the essential step towards breaking up the spirit and the habits of caste, which perpetual intermarriage with no other than the collier class has formed and fostered. It is in the course of producing this effect in a marked manner in the colliery of Mr. Wardlaw Ramsay, of **Whitehill**, where the females were excluded four years before the Act passed. Since that time a considerable proportion of the females married to colliers were the daughters of mechanics or of persons employed in agriculture. This village, and indeed colliery villages generally, afforded several specimens of well-kept cottages, the furniture clean, and with every visible indication of decent habits. Here, as elsewhere, the clean cottages were almost invariably those of men whose wives were either not the daughters of colliers, or who had been in domestic service, and had there learnt practically the comfort and the value of cleanliness, regularity, and order. I also found it commonly remarked, that since the women ceased to work in the pits, their cottages have been kept in better order. At the Duke of Buccleuch's colliery at **Dalkeith**, where females never worked below at all, at Mr. Ramsay's, at the Marquis of Lothian's,

and elsewhere, much attention is paid to measures calculated to amend the habits of the people in this respect. An object of this kind must be always much facilitated by the conviction being impressed on the people to be affected by it, that the employer is anxious to bring it about. Periodical supervision by a committee acting under the employer's authority, with power to give rewards for the best kept cottages, and to fine for persevering neglect, might probably aid the progress of improvement. In general the colliers' cottages, whether in the long rows or otherwise, have only one door; consequently all the refuse is thrown into a pit close before it, and the foot-path and road are usually equally offensive and dirty. Some new cottages on the properties of the Duke of Buccleuch, of Mr. Ramsay, and elsewhere, are so arranged as to have openings between every four or five, for communication with proper receptacles in the rear. But in the size and arrangement of the best cottages, the accommodation provided for the collier falls short of that usually found in the coal districts of England. In the immediate neighbourhood of Berwick, on the English side of the border, is a colliery. The colliers' houses have each an upper story; the floors, stairs, furniture, and the plot before the door, are as clean as frequent scrubbing and minute attention can make them. Their whole appearance within and without betokens that habit of scrupulous cleanliness which, under favourable circumstances, is the characteristic of the English cottage, and which pervades its inmost recesses.

A reference to the state of the cottage gardens naturally suggests itself in this place. Less attention is paid in Scotland to this subject than would be advantageous to the interests of the collier population. A space is often allotted for garden-ground, adjoining the rows of cottages; but it is very rare to find any one of the respective plots fenced off from the rest. The whole space is left open and exposed to the incursions of children, poultry, or other intruders. Little care is consequently bestowed on what is so liable to be injured. The excuse which the collier makes for not fencing off his portion is, that he is liable to be removed at a fortnight's notice, or may, on his own account, take a fancy to transfer himself to another work. Yet in coal districts in England, where hiring for short periods also exists, every plot of garden-ground attached to the colliers' rows is scrupulously fenced round, and every inch of the soil diligently cultivated. His industry, and his hereditary habit of doing his work whatever it may be with thoughtful and pains-taking accuracy, which distinguishes and is as it were the point of honour with, an English labourer of every grade, induces him to protect from intrusion that on which he intends to bestow his labour. Having the opportunity of doing so, his strong sense of property leads him to exercise his right; and having once enclosed his plot, he regards his possession with a satisfactory feeling of ownership, and bestows no niggard care on its cultivation. Every man in his own grade thinking in this respect as he himself does, he feels secure that if he changes his abode he will, in all probability, enter upon another on which similar care has been bestowed. In the Scotch collier villages, except in a few isolated districts, scarcely any one encloses his plot, and much of the benefit of it is consequently thrown away.

In a neighbourhood where garden-plots attached to the cottages were numerous, I observed one which was carefully fenced; staves of old barrels, crooked branches of trees, pieces of iron hoop, and other expedients, having been used for the purpose. "That," said the manager, "is an Englishman's." It was the only one of a great many that at the time contained any crop. It was neatly arranged, and no ground was lost in any corner of it.

A regulation established by common consent, obliging persons keeping poultry to prevent their straying, would tend greatly to the cleanliness of cottages, in which they are now very frequent inmates, as well as to the bestowing of more pains on the gardens. The improvement of the garden management in these villages, and an extension of the allotment so as to afford some aid to the collier while trade is dull and wages low, may probably be thought worthy of engaging the attention of those most nearly interested. The exclusion of the females from the pits, and the consequent loss

to the collier of some portion of his income, seems to point out the allotment system as a mode in which a part of the wife's leisure, and the labour of the children before and after their school hours, may be usefully and beneficially employed.

In many respects, in relation to several circumstances deeply affecting his best interests, the working collier is led by a partially defective or completely erroneous judgment to become his own worst enemy; in nothing more so than in the irregularity in which he indulges, or the regulations which he imposes upon himself, in regard to his hours and amount of work. His too common habit is to give way to idleness for some time after the pay-day, which generally occurs either fortnightly or monthly. Often this idleness is the result of spending the first, or following days also, in intemperance; after which he is not fit for the full exertion of his powers for a day or two. The time lost in this manner he makes up by overworking himself towards the end of the current period of settlement. The extra labour produces exhaustion; exhaustion creates a craving for a new stimulus; and the past scene of intemperance and idleness is repeated. It is lamentable that so large a body of men should be so deficient in self-command as to be unable of themselves to throw off the thralldom of this habit, so injurious to their health, strength, and pecuniary interests, and attended with much ill consequences to their families. When the payments are monthly, the temptation of so large a sum of money received at one time, is often, too great to be resisted; where at least, it has not been anticipated by debts, which are greatly encouraged by monthly payments. There is less excuse when the settlement are fortnightly, as in many of the best regulated works. What the men have not, as it would seem, resolution enough to do of their own accord, a regulation established at the collieries of his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch, where the payments are every fortnight, has aided them in doing. The engine not being allowed to draw coals at those works longer than a certain number of hours a day, every man who wishes to complete his ordinary week's work must perform it regularly, as, by the operation of the rule, he has no opportunity of making up for time lost in idleness. Moreover, the pay-day is here at the beginning of the week instead of at the end; with the good intention, and manifestly with the good effect, of lessening the temptation to misapply the Sunday to criminal or unworthy purposes. But notwithstanding the evident good intention and good tendency of both these regulations, and that no counterbalancing disadvantages arising from them can be pointed out, they did not fail to excite the kind of dissatisfaction that improvements generally have at first to encounter.

The hours during which the engine actually works at the **Dalkeith Collieries**, in drawing coal, are from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., with stoppages of half an hour for breakfast, and another half-hour for dinner. Thus, after leaving the pit, the collier has time to go to the forge to get his picks sharpened, and to wash and dress before his supper time at six o'clock. Before this regulation they would often, towards the end of the week, go down at 3 or 4, and stay in the pit till 6 o'clock. By working steadily under the new rule, they husband their strength, and will perform more work in the course of the year with greater ease to themselves. The interests of the proprietor are also consulted by an arrangement of this kind, because, while irregular work exists, an additional man or two must be kept to do that portion of the work which belongs to the master. These extra men are only partially employed at the beginning of the week; as is also the case with the engine and engine-keeper, and with the horses, which are over-worked towards the end.

It is difficult to secure, by regulations alone, such a right estimate of the value of regularity to the labourer himself as will induce him to make an entire and beneficial change in his habits. The indolent or ill-disposed will still neglect the opportunities placed in their way. At the **Whitehill Colliery**, where the hours are not so much limited, being 12 a day, the good men make 3s. per diem, and the indifferent 2s. 6d., working 10 days in the fortnight. Idle men were making about the latter sum in the days on which they worked; but they often were not at work more than seven or eight

days in the fortnight. One of these colliers had three small children; others had one or two. General experience in this, as in most other cases, confirms the conclusion, that it is the idle and indolent who are the most discontented and most active in misleading others. I was permitted to extract from the books of this colliery, which employs about 100 men, the following examples, showing the prevalence of the habit of working irregularly. There is the less excuse at these works, because they are never obstructed by want of pure air, the ventilation being effected on the best principles, and every attention being paid to the convenience and the interests of the men.

The earnings of a man and his two sons, from September to February last, were as follows:-

For the fortnight ending September 16	£3 18s. 6 ½ d.
For the fortnight ending September 30	£3 9s. 10d
For the fortnight ending October 14	£3 15s. 11d.
For the fortnight ending October 28	£1 17s. 1 ½ d.
For the fortnight ending November 11	£3 11s. 2d.
For the fortnight ending November 25	£2 2s. 7d.
For the fortnight ending December 9	£2 15s. 7 ½d.
For the fortnight ending December 23	£3 11s. 5d.
For the fortnight ending January 6	£2 4s. 8d.
For the fortnight ending January 20	£1 19s. 9 ½d.
For the fortnight ending February 2	£3 10s. 1d.

This was described by the manager to be one of his best and steadiest men. He stated that the nature of the work during that period was uniform, and there was no reason why the higher rates should not have been earned during the whole period.

It often happens, also, that while a man is idle himself he makes his sons work for him. The example of **Robert Pentland** was pointed out to me in the books as a man of fair character. He has two sons working with him. In the fortnight ending September 16,-

The father worked	9 days,
The sons worked	12 days,
September 30,	
They all worked	10 days.
October 14,	
The father worked	9 days,
The sons worked	5 days,
October 28,	
The father worked	5 days,
The sons worked	7 days,

A man of indifferent character, **George Reed**, worked with his sons as follows :

In the fortnight ending December 8

The father worked	8 days,
The sons worked	9 days,
December 23,	
The father worked	10 days,
The sons worked	11 days,
January 6,	
The father worked	9 days,
The sons worked	11 days,

January 20,
 The father worked 6 days,
 The sons worked 10 days,
 February 3,
 The father worked 5 days,
 The sons worked 7 days,

At the **Oxenford** colliery (Lord Stairs) the manager, Mr. D. Forster, informed me that his men, who were on the whole as steady and intelligent as anv in the neighbourhood, earned as follows : -

(February.)
 The good men (with family) £1 10s. 0d. per week
 Moderate men 15 to 20s. per week
 Idle men 10 to 13s. per week

At the collieries of the Duke of Buccleuch many men did not work the whole of the week, and a general opinion was entertained by the managers of collieries throughout the district, that on the revival of trade, and consequently of wages, the men would lessen their work.

If the labour of the day's work at the present standard were oppressive, there might be some excuse for the endeavours to abridge it; but it is less than it was formerly, and is in many cases far less than might be done by steady and active men, without any undue demand on their powers. To abridge, therefore, voluntarily, their means of livelihood and independence, is an injustice to themselves and their families, and, as an example of indolence, injurious to their children. One of its earliest results is, that their earnings in general, whatever they may be, not being properly economised, in consequence either of the irregular habits of the father, or the ignorance of domestic management on the part of the mother, the schooling of the children is the first item of expenditure which is grudged and evaded when the income is diminished. The excuse that the cost of schooling cannot be afforded by the collier is seldom valid. His income is usually far above that of the agricultural labourer, who lives in much greater cleanliness and comfort, and seldom neglects the education of his children to the utmost extent of his opportunities and means. In order to protect the children from the cupidity or the neglect of their parents, several of the most influential proprietors in the Lothians have established regulations by which due attention to the better teaching and training of the rising generation is sought to be secured.

Sir John Hope supports three boys' and one girls' school, at which all the children connected with his works are instructed without payment, the indigent being also provided with books. For many years past no boy has been allowed to work before he was 10 years old, or until he could at least read and write. The following regulations have lately come into operation at the **Dalkeith Colliery**. It will be seen that in one respect they go beyond the limitation as to age imposed by the Mines and Collieries Act, which excludes male children under ten years of age from working below ground. These regulations extend the age to 12 "from and after the 1st January, 1845." They also require each boy to be able to read and write, to the satisfaction of the colliery manager, before he is admitted to work. And to prevent all excuses derived from inability to pay the school-fees, intimation is given that, on the parents producing satisfactory evidence of inability to pay them, they will not be required, as long as the inability exists.* A similar regulation has been in force for some years at the Whitehill Colliery.

* Notice to the Workmen employed at Dalkeith Colliery.

By order of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch, intimation is now made to all the colliers, and other workmen employed at Dalkeith Colliery,-

1st. From and after the 7th January, 1845, no boy will be allowed to work in any department of the Dalkeith Colliery until he has reached the age of twelve years. ,

2nd. Before any boy can be allowed to commence working in the colliery, he must be examined as to the amount of education he has received; and if he cannot read and write to the satisfaction of the colliery manager, or of such other person as may be appointed by His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch to conduct the examination, he will be disqualified for receiving employment at Dalkeith Colliery until he has acquired the requisite education.

3rd. That the parents may have no excuse to plead for neglecting the education of their children, intimation is now particularly given, that to the children of those parents who produce satisfactory evidence that they are unable to pay the ordinary fees charged at the Colliery School, education, free of any charge, will be afforded so long as that inability exists.

Dalkeith Colliery, March, 1844. James Wright.

The following communication from the **Rev. Thomas Gordon, minister of Newbattle** gives a satisfactory view of the success of the measures taken by direction, of the Marquis of Lothian for promoting education in that parish:-

"In visiting lately, I took a census of the population and of the numbers attending school. The result was, that in three villages (comprising almost all the colliers in the parish) there were 664 inhabitants, and 197 professedly attending school. This enormous proportion, double the average of Scotland, and very nearly so of Prussia, must be accounted for by a new and excellent regulation lately introduced by Lord Lothian; and which, though I believe violently opposed at first, is now generally acknowledged, even by the colliers themselves, as beneficial, namely, that each collier should pay a certain sum as rent, varying from 6d. to 1s. weekly, and that for this all their children should be educated gratis, and that a doctor should attend them when ill. The consequence is, that the children are sent to the infant school when about two years and a half or three years old; and at present many of the females of about 16 or 18, who formerly wrought below ground and are now destitute of employment, now attend and learn to sew. The young lads, too, who work during the day, avail themselves of the privilege, and to the number of 30 or 40 attend the evening school in 'East-houses.' An evening school in Newton Grange (population 220), under these regulations, would be very desirable, and would be attended by 30 at least, mostly boys from 12 to 16, who work in the pits during the day. The great complaint is the irregularity of attendance: one teacher informed me that she calculates upon one-third of the whole number being absent, every day. The mothers, I suspect, are scarcely yet trained to domestic habits, and are apt to stray away, leaving the care of the younger children to some of the elder ones, and thus detaining them from the school. They now seem anxious to have their children instructed; but whether this arises from the circumstance of their seeing the value of education, or of their having nothing to pay for it, I do not yet know them well enough to be able to say. The great object to be arrived at is a higher standard of education. Were that accomplished we should have less discontent and misery."

Among the adults, the number possessing nothing of the rudiments of education is not so great as among similar classes in England. I found few cottages entirely unprovided with books; but it would appear that the habits of the Lothian collier have hitherto indisposed him from receiving that advantage from them which leads to the enlarging his faculties and strengthening his judgment. In general he is very partially informed and prejudiced; but his disposition is quiet and inoffensive, and his manners respectful. Under the guide of a more enlightened intelligence he would advance rapidly in the career of improvement. At all the works I met with men who could not fail to create a favourable impression of the capacity of the whole to entitle themselves, by amended habits and

sensible conduct, to the respect of all other orders of the community. Hitherto their only advisers have been men of their own class, scarcely raised above themselves in intelligence, and partaking of most of their errors. Such sympathy and kindness on the part of their superiors as would lead in all cases to an earnest regard and consideration for the interests and comfort of the collier population, and the placing in their way opportunities of deriving instruction and advice from persons really qualified to give it on wise and just principles, would go far towards restoring that satisfactory relation of mutual confidence between employers and employed which is so much to the advantage of both. The increase of parochial superintendence, and of schools presided over by really efficient and enlightened teachers, is, with the immediate care and attention of the proprietor or his agents, among the most obvious instruments of improvement. These topics will be further touched upon when the condition of another important mining district of Scotland has been exhibited.

LANARKSHIRE.

The rise, progress, and economical and moral condition of the great mining district of Lanarkshire has been so fully described by Mr. Tancred, in his Report to the Children's Employment Commissioners, in 1841, that a very few general remarks are all that will be here necessary before proceeding to the particulars to which I am desirous of calling attention.

The principal site of the mineral wealth of this part of Scotland is the immediate neighbourhood of **Coatbridge** and **Airdrie**, in the parishes of Old and New Monkland, from 8 to 12 miles east of Glasgow. The application of the hot-blast to the smelting of the black band iron-stone since 1830, has caused the population of these two parishes to increase with unexampled rapidity. These remote and at no distant period thinly peopled localities, possessed in 1821 a population of 12,000. This had increased in 1831 to 19,447, which again had become 40,193 in 1841, having more than doubled itself in ten years.

The number of furnaces in and out of blast at and near **Coatbridge**, is thus given in the 'Mining Journal' for December 1843, at a period of great depression in the trade :-

Work.	Owners	Furnaces In Blast	Furnaces Out	Estimated weekly Produce.	
Gartsherrie	W. Baird and Co.	11	5	1200	
Dundyvan	John Wilson	7	2	750	250
Calder	W. Dixon	6	2	600	
Carnbroe	Alison and Co.	4	2	500	
Summerlee	Wilson's and Co.	3	3	270	
Langloan	Addie and Co.	3		400	
		34	14	3720	250
Total	48 furnaces				

All the persons employed about these furnaces, or in getting the coal and iron to supply them, live either at **Coatbridge**, the population of which is about 9000, or at the town of **Airdrie** (two miles to the east), containing a population of 12,000, or in the collections of colliers' and miners' houses in the vicinity. There are also numerous collieries, partly for the supply of the iron-works, partly for land-sale ; several of which adjoin the large neighbouring village of **Holytown**.

The population, as might be expected from the rapidity with which it has increased, is of a very mixed character. Persons have been brought together from all parts of the country, and from a

variety of other occupations, attracted by the demand for labour. Many of them are Irish.

The common form and arrangement of the colliers' and miners' houses before described prevails here very generally; that of long rows, single, or one behind the other, or in parallelograms, containing from 20 to 100 houses or more together. They have no upper story, and consist solely of a room on each side of the door. The general characteristics are crowded rooms, dirt and untidiness within and without, neglect of garden-ground, where there is any, and all other indications of a population either regardless of, or not in a situation to observe, the comforts and decencies of domestic life. Full two-thirds of the people appeared, by their habits, either never to have risen to the grade of civilization attained by the ordinary labouring class of this country, or to have sunk below it, and to have abandoned themselves to reckless sensuality. Some of the better inclined, anxious to achieve the improvement of themselves and their families, seemed unable to resist the influences which dragged them down to the common level; others, though apparently a small minority in every one of the numerous mining colonies which I visited with their managers or proprietors, being either possessed of superior intelligence, or trained in early life to better habits, maintain their houses and their families in a state of propriety equal to the best of their neighbours in other employments.

This is a state of things on the whole which is as unsatisfactory to the proprietors as it can be to any one, and which they are disposed to look upon, with as much regret. In forming a judgment respecting it, the fact must be remembered that this great development of manufacturing industry is not more than 20 years old, and that the circumstances attending its rise and progress are for the most part new in each particular locality, and to the individual whose skill and enterprise have given it birth. It is the creation of a few men in a few years, and is the result of the devotion of a high degree of intelligence and perseverance to one object. All the energies of each individual proprietor have been required to arrange, design, build, and set on foot his works, to economize materials, to perfect the processes of manufacture, to extend his connexions, to watch the openings and fluctuations of trade. Each being the "architect of his own fortunes," his anxieties, his labours, his powers of mind, have been directed without intermission to the struggles arising in the common course of competition. In proportion as he succeeds, and as his capital increases, he gives employment to more and more people. To his mind, to his character, to his labour, to his skill, integrity, and industry, they are indebted for the power he obtains of paying them wages, in these instances generally ample, sometimes exceedingly high. In these wages they receive the means of animal enjoyment, and also, if they will use them for such purposes, of moral and religious well-being. Whether they will so use them is in most instances left to themselves. Whether the external circumstances in which the proprietor has placed, or is about to place them, predispose to a due regard to these latter considerations or the contrary, is not often a matter of previous reflection with him. His concern is principally with material, not with moral results. To summon before the mind the aggregate of moral causes that are at work, and to trace them, by anticipation, to their legitimate consequences, is the employment of a different kind of intelligence,—of thoughts flowing in a channel apart from that in which his own usually runs. How the human beings who are his subordinate fellow-workers in the building up of this vast fabric of successful industry will be effected in their hearts and in their minds, in the course of the process, is not often calculated. If it had been, it must have been foreseen, by the most inevitable process of logical induction, that the circumstances surrounding them must as infallibly lead to a great variety of bad consequences, as if those consequences themselves had been expressly intended and wished for. They have been the natural products of the general laws of the human mind and disposition, the forces and tendencies of which had either been overlooked, or had been left to themselves, in the expectation that some one would step in to deal with them. The arduous task has not been adequately met; and the final result is, amidst a scene of great material prosperity, and an abundance of the means of animal enjoyment,

a vast amount of social disorganization and moral degradation. The evils have grown up until they have become too palpable to be misunderstood. A first step has been made towards amending them in the recognition of their existence by those under whose eye they have been suffered to take root; some of whom have also commenced active measures, in the hope of laying the foundations of a better state of things, not without much concern at the aspect which the present presents to them.

My own impressions of the unfavourable state of the collier and mining population in this district, founded on pretty general and minute observation among the works and the cottages in all parts of it, were amply continued by the testimony of a great variety of persons of every grade, who permitted me to record the facts with which they obligingly furnished me.

The following specimens of the evidence embrace some of the leading characteristics.

A minister of the Established Church thus expressed himself:-

"I have been in the habit of visiting the colliers' houses. I always know one, in a moment, from the dirt and disorder. Some few only are decent. Most of them are far different in neatness and cleanliness from the houses of the agricultural population. The great bulk of the colliers spend, all their money in eating and drinking. I find few books in their houses. It is not often that I find a good Bible. It is difficult to get them to send their children to school. The fact is, they continue still quite a separate class from other people. They are so dirty that the people in general wont associate with them. They only associate with each other. To this there will always be a few exceptions. They don't know much of what is going on in the world. I never saw a History of England or Scotland in any of their houses, though I live in the neighbourhood of five collier villages. There is not much difference between the colliers and the iron-stone miners. In moral condition they are both behind hand."

A dissenting minister stated-

"I have been in this neighbourhood several years, during which time I have frequently visited colliers in their houses. I rarely see any books but a Bible, and a few on religious subjects. Their ignorance is lamentable, and their prejudices apparently invincible. I have some hope of the rising generation, as schools are beginning to be built. I have tried to bring the adults to a place of worship by persuasion, and conversations with them in their houses. I instructed one man for four hours a week for four months. He came to the communion, but never appeared at the chapel afterwards, having relapsed into his old habits. They are very superstitious, which is their substitute for religion ; numbers of them I find entirely ignorant of every thing."

Mr. Thomas Fell, colliery manager, **Dundyvan** : —

"I have been acquainted with colliers for 27 years. My opinion is that their intelligence is below that of other classes of men. They are not enlightened like men of other trades, but very circumscribed in their views. Other labouring men will converse on general subjects, but you will seldom get a collier off his one subject of the unions and disputes between themselves and their masters. Books of general information are very rare in their houses. They may read a little when books are put in their way ; but we had a good library at Arden, for subscribers of 1d. a. month, and it lasted only a few months; they would not pay the subscription."

Mr. Robertson, surgeon, **Airdrie**:—

"I have lived in and near Airdrie eight years. The conduct of the collier population is most disorderly. When they have high wages they work a few days and then drink away until they have spent all they have earned. The more their wages rise the more dissipated are their habits."

Dr. Stewart, M.D., who visits professionally the work-people of the large works at **Gartsherrie** and **Dundyvan**, confirms the above opinions as to the moral and intellectual condition of the colliers and miners, and adds that—

"They are generally led by some one whom they consider a wise head among them, who picks up the news, and any information that may concern their interests, and round whom they gather as their oracle."

In the immediate neighbourhood of the large village of **Coatbridge**, the centre of this district, some of the most unfavourable specimens exist of those habits of neglect and discomfort which generally characterize the inhabitants of the long rows or squares of colliers' houses. Within 150 yards of the centre of that, village of upwards of 9000 inhabitants is a collection of about 100 dwellings, forming three sides of a square, most of which exhibit within and without deplorable evidences of being inhabited by people lost to all sense of the decencies of domestic life. Rooms, furniture, children, are in the utmost state of dirt. Families and lodgers are crowded together in such a manner as to make privacy impossible. No instance of bad example in habits, morals, or conduct can escape notice, or fail of spreading its contamination. The manager, who very obligingly went over these buildings with me, stated that some years ago he had made some personal efforts to cause the people to amend their habits, but without success; and that he had never entered them since until that day. He appears to be now aware that he despaired too soon.

At the **Calder Iron Works** the houses are very old as well as very crowded and dirty. The proprietors, I understand, had it in contemplation to improve these dwellings immediately upon the settlement of some legal question concerning them. Accumulated filth before the doors, and on all sides, marked the habits of neglect which prevailed. The manager stated that pains had been taken to make the houses and places round clean and decent, but they were no sooner cleared than they were made dirty again. Open drains were being constructed between the rows of houses to carry off the refuse from them, and the surface water. More attention is paid to forming habits of cleanliness among the people in the large works of **Gartsherrie** and **Dundyvan**, and some others, though hitherto with no very marked success. It is easily practicable to remove, by employing permanently, as in those instances, a horse and man for the express purpose, the rapidly accumulating collections of filth which, to the disgrace of this people, they see no want of self-respect, in allowing to exist at their very thresholds. But to produce among them a sense of repugnance at such habits, or a feeling of moral inferiority attaching to a disregard of personal cleanliness, is an object not yet attained. The Messrs. **Wilson**, of **Dundyvan**, have attached to their rows of houses proper receptacles for all refuse, and they impose a fine, which they often have occasion to inflict, upon any one neglecting their regulations respecting them. In marked contrast with the houses provided for the Scotch and Irish are those built for the English labourers employed about the furnaces and rolling mills at these works. The former have only a ground-floor, and the largest only two rooms. The latter have all an upper story, some four rooms, and appropriate conveniences. The interiors of the former seldom display much care and attention to comfort, and the road or square before them is uniformly in a state of dirt and neglect. The latter are scrupulously clean within, every article of furniture in its place, the wife and children neat, nothing offensive meeting the eye, and an appearance of regularity and domestic comfort throughout. On the outside of the door the stone slab was washed and sprinkled with brick-dust, for want of sand; and the foot-way, the road, and the whole square free from all dirt and impurity. The receptacles for refuse were 30 or 40 yards away from many of the doors, yet everything was unhesitatingly carried there. In the Scotch and Irish quarter these receptacles are close at hand. Yet fines were ineffectual to cause them to be always used.

The dull and depressing nature of their work, pursued in darkness for so many hours, must undoubtedly predispose the minds of the colliers to seek excitement after it is over. The dirt and

discomfort of their houses, the want of privacy, the absence of mental or other resources, naturally lead them to seek that excitement in brooding over their real or imaginary grievances, or in gross sensuality. The latter breaks out chiefly on the fortnightly or monthly pay-nights and is continued often for days after. This is greatly encouraged by there being seldom at hand any power having either a moral or physical control over their actions. The vast collection of people congregated in these two parishes of Old and New Monkland, to the amount of 40,000, is composed, with comparatively few exceptions, of the class of colliers, miners, and men working about the furnaces. Whatever restraint, therefore, may naturally be supposed to be exercised by the supervision, authority, and examples of the classes of society of a higher grade, is but little felt there. The low animal habits of the uneducated or demoralized, receive little check or rebuke from a superior presence. These outbursts of dissipation, or its habitual practice, are greatly promoted and aggravated by two circumstances within the power of the legislature to remedy, — the want of an efficient police, and the unlimited facilities for obtaining ardent spirits.

The population of the town of **Airdrie** was, according to the census of 1841, 12,896. There are 13 mining villages in its immediate neighbourhood, within a radius of three miles ; of which **Coatbridge** and its adjuncts contain a population of above 9000, and the other villages, on an average, much above 1000 each. On the pay-nights it is estimated that upwards of 10,000 people flock into the town of **Airdrie** from these surrounding villages. Scenes of uncontrolled license ensue, which there are no means of either preventing or punishing. The police force of Airdrie consists of one superintendent and four constables ; on Saturday nights they have four or five assistants, paid 1s. each. The consequences of providing thus inadequately for the peace and safety of the town are thus described by the Superintendent of the police.

James Lawson, superintendent of police, **Airdrie**, states :—

"I have acted in this capacity three years last June. I was a police constable in Glasgow for six years and upwards. I have four men under me : this is the whole force kept in regular pay. On Saturday night we have from four to five assistants, paid 1s. each. This is the greatest number of assistants I ever had. I am obliged to have these assistants on Saturday nights, because many people, colliers and miners, come in from the country. Those often get drunk, and are in a riotous state. In many cases we have been obliged to let prisoners go, on account of the smallness of our numbers, and frequently assaults have been committed on ourselves. On the 24th of November the mob threw stones at the police, and we were obliged to let the prisoners go. Not a Saturday ever occurs that we are able to act as we would if we had a good force. Within the last three years, it has twice occurred that large mobs have had things all their own way in this town. On the last occasion they attempted to set fire to a house in which the constables had got some prisoners in custody ; they were colliers who had been arrested for desertion of service. The rioters were colliers also, some of them residing in the town, but mostly from Dundyvan and Coatbridge, and other villages. The prisoners were rescued. The offences which occur in the town are chiefly assaults and petty thefts. Many of the latter might be prevented if our force was larger; but we have only four men for night as well as day work. The population of Airdrie was, by the census of 1841, 12,896."

Mr. Rankin, surgeon, the provost of Airdrie, confirmed the above on its being read over to him ; **Dr. Begg**, the parochial minister, **Mr. Kidd**, banker, and several other inhabitants, described the demoralizing results to the people by their being thus permitted to abandon themselves to riot and dissipation without check or control.

Mr. Robertson, surgeon, stated :—

"As an inhabitant of this town, I feel most insecure from the great influx of colliers occasionally, and from the nature of the neighbourhood. They are always riotous on pay-nights, but more

especially during strikes, which are occurring continually, when they meet in large numbers, drink whisky, and get excited. At that time the respectable inhabitants of the place have no protection. My opinion is, that the colliers and miners themselves would be the first to benefit by the establishment of a good system of police. They would be taught to respect the law, and prevented from running into those disorders, and would learn to respect themselves. I think also that there is nothing more important that could be done for this part of the country than the establishment of a rural police. I am frequently in the habit of going out from Airdrie at all hours of the night, professionally. I frequently pass and meet with people drunk and disorderly on the roads. I often hear respectable persons, and the better disposed among the colliers themselves, complain that they cannot be out at night without risk from such persons, and especially on Saturday nights. Cases often occur of assaults committed on the roads by such persons."

To the same effect is the testimony of **Mr. John Mure Steel**:-

"I am procurator-fiscal for Airdrie, and also for the Airdrie district of the middle ward of this county. The sheriff-substitute is Mr. J. Veitch, at Hamilton, who has a fiscal also at Hamilton, Mr. Dykes. My office of fiscal for the district is held under the justices of the peace; it comprises the parishes of Old and New Monkland, Bothwell, and Shotts.

The magistrates acting in this district are Mr. Kidd, Airdrie, Mr. Rankin, provost of Airdrie, and the senior baillie for the time being, as also a county magistrate. There are also the Messrs. Wilson, Dundyvan, the Messrs. Bairds, Mr. Buttery, Mr. Murray, Dr. Clark of Moffat, Mr. Black of Hawyards ; all these are connected with coal or iron works.

*I have resided in Airdrie for seven or eight years; I confirm all that Mr. Robertson has said as to the insecurity of the town, and the disorders committed by drunken persons going home at all hours of the night from Airdrie to the neighbouring mining villages. These villages are **Clarkston, Arbuckle, Ballochney, Rigg-end, Gavel, Green-gares, Chapel Hall, Calder Bank, Faskin, Calder, Coatdyke, Coatbridge. Dundyvan, Gartsherrie, Rosehall**, all within a circle of three miles, and comprising a population of upwards of 30,000, and including Airdrie, upwards of 40,000. All these villages, with the exception of Chapel Hall, a population of about 2000, are in the parishes of Old and New Monkland.*

In any riot or emergency, there is a great want of any independent officer, such as the sheriff, to take a lead in the matter, and he lives nine miles off, through a bad road. In my opinion a paid magistrate residing here is greatly wanted."

Any increase in the police force of Airdrie would be of comparatively little benefit, unless some superintendence was also at the same time brought to bear upon the neighbouring villages. It can scarcely be deemed consistent with justice to the many well-behaved and respectable people of the working classes, who have been attracted to these localities by the demand for their labour, and who have elsewhere been accustomed to live under the protection of a well-regulated state of society, that they should here find themselves exposed to the contamination of the unbridled licence which prevails. Still less is it consistent with justice to the rising generation, that their early years should be surrounded by all the unchecked influences of the worst example. A rural police, keeping an eye upon those villages, would put a restraint upon vice as well as crime. Its effects are generally acknowledged to have been such during the period of the temporary employment of a force of this kind at the time of, and subsequent to, the strike and disturbances of 1812.

The need of a rural police for the mining district of Lanarkshire was much pressed on my attention by several of the iron masters, and other persons most interested in that part of the county; and I was requested to bring the subject very prominently before the notice of the Government. It is a question that has already occupied the attention of the county generally. One of the chief difficulties it has to encounter is the reluctance of the Upper Ward to concur in it. This district is remote from

the seat of mining and manufacturing industry, and its population is purely agricultural. Were the middle and lower wards, in which the mining population is collected, disposed to rate themselves separately from the upper ward, for this or any other purpose, they have no power of doing so, the Act enabling justices at quarter sessions to alter the divisions of counties (6 Will. IV. c. 12) not extending to Scotland. But no one can observe the position of the city of Glasgow, surrounded by a mining and manufacturing population far exceeding 100,000, and itself containing, according to the census of 1841, a population of 267,552, without recognizing the expediency of a police force, so organized as to extend an uniform authority over the whole of this vast and concentrated mass of people ; the more so as within the city and precincts of Glasgow itself there are two or three entirely distinct police jurisdictions, and beyond those precincts no authority at all, except that of a few parish constables. I am aware that the subject was brought before the House of Commons in 1842, and that the question of consolidating the police jurisdictions in Glasgow has only been deferred. The facts already adduced respecting the state of the population immediately beyond the boundaries of the Glasgow jurisdiction, and throughout the lower and middle ward of the county, are, I apprehend, sufficient to raise a strong presumption that it would be advantageous to embrace the whole in one general measure. I was furnished with many additional facts and documents confirming this opinion; some of which referred to the great and rapid increase of the population, the more than proportionate increase of criminal cases, the great increase in the costs of prisons, the amount of undetected and unpunished crime, the need there was of affording countenance and protection to the well-disposed, and subjecting those of a contrary character to some control. But as this is not the opportunity for going into detail upon the subject, I have abstained from saying more than is necessary to justify the mention I have thought it my duty to make of it, as bearing upon the moral and social condition of so large a mass of the collier and mining population.

Effect of unrestricted sale of ardent spirits

Another source of evil already referred to is the unrestricted sale of ardent spirits. Practically it is subject to no control. A licence may be purchased for 2s. 6d. from the magistrate's clerk. There is, in ordinary cases, no preliminary inquiry, nor are any difficulties interposed; consequently spirits are sold in almost every provision shop, as well as in many others. Out of 126 occupied shops in and close to **Coatbridge**, there are 25 grocers and spirit dealers, 33 spirit dealers, 4 eating houses selling spirits, 4 stores selling spirits, - in all, 66 shops in which spirits are sold, besides three inns. This is upwards of 52 per cent.; so that at least every other shop in this place sells spirits.

In one point of view the practice of selling spirits in grocers' and other provision shops is particularly objectionable, as holding out temptations to the females, while laying out the earnings of the family, to spend money in ardent spirits, which they drink upon the spot. It offers also great facilities to unscrupulous shopkeepers, who may be disposed to tempt the wives to deal at their shops, by an occasional present of a dram before they begin to make their purchases.

On the public houses there appears to be no control whatever, and they are often open all night. The precise quantity of spirits drunk in this district could not be ascertained from any public sources; but all private information went to prove that it far exceeds the average of all Scotland, which itself amounts to more than two gallons per head of the population. (The consumption, as compared with population, is thus given by Mr. Porter, for the year 1811. England, per head, 0.51 gallons: Scotland, 2.28 gallons; Ireland, 0.80 gallons "Progress of the Nation," vol. iii. p. 54. Though not an exact test of the amount of intemperance, it affords the ground of a strong presumption.) The temptation arising from having ardent spirits so accessible is too great for a people with the habits, and in the grade of civilization, of this mining community. The taste and the example of indulging it spreads from the husband to the wife, and thence to the children. If wages rise, the father of a family, enslaved by this brutalizing passion, works fewer hours, and idles away his increased leisure

(that most precious gift to a working man, if rightly used) in dissipation and drunkenness, instead of bracing up his energies to take advantage of the returning tide of prosperity to do his duty to his family, by economizing his additional earnings, paying for the schooling of his children, providing more furniture or more clothing, and giving to his habitation the appearance of being the home of a rational man. The Commissioners of Poor Law Inquiry for Scotland take a similar view of the nature and extent of this evil in a passage in their Report, which I beg to subjoin :-

"There can be no question that much of the misery and destitution which prevails in Scotland is to be attributed to the excessive use of ardent spirits. Intemperance may, in some instances, be occasioned by poverty, which seeks, in the excitement of the moment, to drown the recollection of its cares and anxieties; but we believe that intemperance is far more frequently the cause of poverty than the effect. We fear that the excessive number of low public houses leads many into dissipated habits, who, if the temptation had not existed, might, have continued sober and industrious. On this subject we have had many complaints. In some places licenses to keep public houses appear to be granted without due attention being paid to the character of the applicants, and with little regard to the wants of the district. We think it would be highly desirable if, by legislative measures, or otherwise, the present system of licenses could be placed on a sounder footing, both with regard to the limitation of number, and to the better regulation of the public houses. Much immorality arises from this source, and incalculable misery to poor families, more especially from the encouragement to vice and debauchery on Sundays." Report of the Poor Law Inquiry Commission for Scotland, p. 63.

Grievances

Sensuality has produced indolence, and a craving after more pay and less work. It has also promoted, and in its turn has been promoted by, ignorance, which seeks employment for its vacant thoughts in brooding over "grievances." Of these latter it cannot be said that they have not at various works some that are more or less real, though by far the greatest grievances under which they are suffering are those which they have brought upon themselves, and which they uphold with the most unfortunate pertinacity. It must be allowed that, having in general been much neglected by their superiors until a comparatively recent period, they have no confidence in any persons but those of their own class. They are therefore suspicious, obstinate, and unwilling to ask or take counsel from any but their own selected advisers. The want of wisdom and consequent rashness of these is frequently conspicuous in dealing with the complicated and difficult questions which they undertake to adjust. Hence arise continual instances of deep, extensive, and irreparable injury to the interests of all parties. The comparatively few among the working men who are more enlightened and more competent to trace out propositions or actions to their legitimate consequences are overborne by the force of the majority.

The real grievances of which they have to complain, and which I find have existed, or do exist in some quarters, relate chiefly to the usual topics of excessive and arbitrary fines; the being compelled to give overweight; impositions practised upon them in the mode of weighing, and in the weights themselves; too long settlements of wages, and the truck system.

In justice to all the employers, their managers and agents, with whom I communicated, I am bound to say that it is impossible for persons holding the responsible position which they fill to be more sincere and earnest than I believe them to be in endeavouring to the best of their judgment to prevent any just source of disagreement or ill-feeling arising between themselves and their workmen in regard to the manner of carrying on their works, and to remove it when discovered. Men possessing the ability which has enabled them to call into existence and to carry on their vast works cannot be slow to perceive their interest in so conducting matters as to give no real cause of complaint, to their workmen. A difference of judgment may prevail as to the best, mode to be

resorted to in regard to particular details, in the regulation of which the master exercises, as he has a full right, to do, his best discretion. It cannot be expected that he should submit to the dictation of his men ; but if he is led to see that, one mode is more satisfactory than another, his own interests, as well as the respect he owes to the feelings of others, will prompt him to adopt it.

The grievance of arbitrary and excessive fines for sending up light weight, or foul coal, is one which has been much canvassed, and has been charged upon many more of the employers than I could find upon investigation were in any degree liable to it. In some few of the works, the mode of keeping the men to their duty, in regard to the quantity and quality of the coal they send up, does not exhibit as much forbearance and consideration for them as is shown at others. The methods of ascertaining the question of weight most commonly in use are three; either one "hutch" of every man's work is weighed, and its weight is taken to be the average applicable to the rest of his work for that day; or one hutch is weighed, and if it proves light it is forfeited, which is a loss of about 4d.; or every hutch is weighed, and the net weight of each accounted for. These methods exist at both great and small works. The first appears to be the least satisfactory; and, judging from the following example, taken from the books of one of the largest works, not very conducive to regularity.

Date	Pit	No. of hutches put out by the men in 24 days	No of hutches condemned
August 21, 1843	No. 10	3,300	29
August 21, 1843	No. 9	2,770	27
November 11, 1843	No. 9	3,665	6
December 9, 1843	No. 9	3,404	11
February 3, 1844	No. 10	1,979	13
February 3, 1844	No. 9	6,103	69

The reason given for the irregularity was, that "*sometimes the pit-head man is strict, and the short weight ceases. If the men think the pit-head man is careless, they then try sending up short weight in the hope to escape.*" Strict weight is not insisted upon ; an allowance is made of several pounds. Many men at these works had never had a single hutch condemned. But in order to be on the sure side, an honest man will be led to give overweight; while the man of a contrary disposition is tempted by the hope of impunity to endeavour to defraud.

Douglas Baird, Esq., one of the proprietors of the **Gartsherrie Iron Works**, the largest in Scotland, stated that at their works,—

"One hutch is weighed per day of each man's labour. If it is 13lb. light he is liable to forfeit a hutch equal to 4d. If the same man is found to send up light weight frequently he is discharged. It does not happen that we have to discharge men for light weight oftener than twice or thrice a year. We get good weight from our men; this we attribute to our having a fair understanding with them, and to our abstaining from harsh measures. We have men in our employ whom we have never had occasion to fine for light weight. If a man is found to have sent up light weight he is allowed to make it up the next day."

Fines are also inflicted for sending up stone mixed with the coal. This may sometimes, from the nature of the seam, be difficult to avoid; and in such cases any instances which occur require obviously to be treated with proportionate leniency. Other instances may result, either from a determination to offend, or from a gross negligence, as the following:—

Mr. Douglas Baird stated—

"Some time ago I had a man in my employ who was continually sending up stone among his coal He was therefore fined according to the rules; but he still persisted, and I found it was getting every day worse. At length I was obliged to discharge him. I fined him first one hutch; then, as that did not check him, he was fined two; at length I took a whole day's work from him, for his continual violation of our rules. He was repeatedly warned. The seam was not one in which there was any difficulty in keeping the clean coal separate; and before that man worked there, the practice of putting out stone with the coal was unknown. I had frequent complaints from customers in Glasgow, after that man came to work, about stone being mixed with the coal, and at that time we actually lost customers in consequence. I was obliged to discharge six or seven men for the same offence, which I had never previously had occasion to do. After those men were discharged clean coal only was sent up ; my customers resumed their purchases, and I have had no complaint since."

Several specific complaints were brought to my notice, into the particulars of which it will not be expected that I should here enter, imputing arbitrary conduct to masters in respect to fines. On inquiry I was satisfied that in every instance they were either founded altogether in error, or greatly exaggerated.

The most, satisfactory mode of dealing with the question of weights is that adopted at many of the works, even the larger ones, of paying the men for the net weight sent up, and paying each man separately in silver, as at the **Shotts Works**

"Every hutch is weighed: if it is light, the deficiency is deducted; if above weight, the surplus is allowed. The hutch is run over a weighing-machine, and no time is lost. We consume 200 tons of coals daily. The hutch is about. 4 cwt. We have no contractors, nor ever had. Every man is paid separately, in silver, at the end of the fortnight. It takes a clerk four hours to pay them in this way, instead of one. This is all the difference it makes. We do not charge them a percentage on getting the change for them." - Evidence of Mr. Ch. Baird, Shotts.

I did not meet with an instance in which I had reason to believe that an application on the part of the men to place a person at the pit-head on their own behalf, to superintend the weighing, would be refused. I found it acted upon in many instances, and that in others it had been, until the men abandoned it of their own accord, being satisfied of the fairness with which they were treated. Their suspicions are sometimes directed against the accuracy of the weights themselves, and a petition is in progress for requiring the inspector of weights and measures to examine officially those used at the coal and iron works.

The practice of requiring some hundred weights beyond the imperial standard, to be given by the collier to make up the ton, as before mentioned, is seen to be only an indirect, though very objectionable, way of adjusting a reduction of wages. The usage of the country appears to sanction 21 cwt. being given by the collier as the ton of coal, to cover the loss by breakage and weather before it reaches the consumer; but all additions to that weight are deservedly looked upon by him with great disfavour. His complaint that he is not paid for the small or dross coal is not so reasonable, the price of the labour of sending it up being included in that paid for the large coal.

Truck

Another cause of complaint is found in the fortnightly or monthly settlements upon three or five weeks' work, the settlement being brought up to the end of the previous week. Those who complain require that the masters should pay their men every week. This question is also connected with the truck system, which is alleged to be aided by long settlements. The accusations of agitators seem to

assume so uniformly that in these or any similar regulations adopted by the masters to facilitate the carrying on their works, they can have no other object but to curb or oppress their men, that it appears almost to have been received among many of the latter as an acknowledged truth. I trust that the following statements may aid in removing some portion of the misunderstanding and acrimony which is apt to prevail on these subjects.

Of the 12 iron works in Lanarkshire, nine, containing 56 blast furnaces, have stores connected with them (in other words, pay part of the wages of their men in goods, though they contrive to evade the law against, it), while three only, containing 17 blast furnaces, have no store.

The imputations against the proprietors keeping stores are, that they compel very many of their men to deal, under a declared or tacit understanding that they will be discharged if they do not; and that whatever money is advanced before the pay-day must be spent in the store.

At all the works having stores I was very obligingly permitted to examine the books, pay-sheets, balance-sheets, store-books, or other documents which I wished to be submitted to me. I was thus enabled to ascertain for myself the exact amount of wages paid, of advances made, or the manner of keeping the store account, and its amount at any given time; and thence to test the correctness of general statements afterwards furnished to me. In many cases I was able to extract myself from the books, &c., the figures which I am about to give.

The result proved that at the following works, namely, **Gartsherrie, Dundyvan, Carnbroe, Langloan, Omoa, Monkland, Coltness, Clyde, Drumpeller Colliery**, in the six months ending Christmas, 1843, out of £126,350 8s. 1 ½d. paid in wages, £33,455 14s., or a little more than 26 per cent., was paid in advance, that is, previously to the settling day. But in every instance, except one (Coltness), the store account is less than the "advance account," often by a considerable sum. Stating the point, therefore, in round numbers, and for a whole year, it may be said that of £250,000 paid by these works in wages, £50,000 passes through their stores.

To this sum, therefore, the question of truck narrows itself, in reference to the Lanarkshire iron works, including the large colliery of Drumpeller.

This disposes at once of the outcry of its being generally compulsory, and also of the complaint that whatever sum is advanced between the settlements must, under pain of dismissal, be spent in the store. The compulsion is clearly limited to the sum drawn for the express purpose of being laid out in the store, and to that portion of the men who require these advances. I was assured in all the works, that a large proportion, and always the best men, never required any advances at all, as in the instance of the Clyde Works, in the following page; or only very trifling sums, as in the instance of Langloan, Coltness, &c.

The real state of the case will be made clear by the following evidence respecting each of the above works, and by the reasons which will be adduced, - first, such as are urged in behalf of stores, - secondly, those which go to prove that they are on the whole injurious.

At the **Dundyvan** works the sum paid in wages for the year 1843 was £75,000 (exclusive of sums paid to contractors living at a distance). Of this sum £15,200 was advanced from time to time between the settlement days ; but of this only £11,717 9s. 5d. passed through the store, the remainder of the money advanced (namely, £3482 10s. 7d.) having been spent elsewhere. The amount of sales in this store to persons not connected with the works was stated to me from the books to have been £882 10s. 7d. which, with the above sum of £11,717 9s. 5d., made up the sum

total of the business done in the store for that year, namely, £12,600.

In the **Summerlee** works, the total amount of wages for the year 1843 was £11.809 2s. 8d. The total amount received from the men was stated to be £5069 11s. 10d. The total receipts in the stores were £5958 7s., being £888 15s. 2d. from surrounding inhabitants.

Of the management of this store, Mr. **J. H. Swan**, the cashier of the works, stated as follows :-

"These works began in 1836. For the first year and a half we had no store ; the men were in the habit of running away to the nearest public house, and getting intoxicated during their work. They are not allowed to have from the store more than a glass of whisky a day; this acts as some check upon them. Before we had the store, the improvident, having no credit at the retail shops, were obliged to use the name of an oversman on whose credit they were allowed to take up goods. The oversman demanded five per cent, from the shopkeeper for his risk; and the shopkeeper, taking advantage of his being tied to his shop, generally charged ten per cent more of profit. The provident men do not necessarily deal on credit, either in the store or in the shops.

All our men can get money to spend from our office whenever they please. I pay it myself. I never refuse it, except when I feel assured, from the character of the man, that he is going to make a bad use of it. For instance, a man told me he wanted money to buy a coffin for his child; he went and spent all the money in drink. I should refuse such a man a second time, and I always refuse it when they apply in a state of intoxication. If a man will only come to me for money in advance which he wishes to spend away from the store, he is never refused, if he is a good character. But if he gets it from the advance clerk, and takes it away, it deranges the accounts; so we require that in that case he should come to me. If he does not do this I lose the money, as it would go to the credit, of the store. No man was ever turned away from these works for not dealing at the store.

At the **Drumpeller Colliery** the wages paid in six months were £52837. 16s. 10 ½d., the advances were £3128 10s. 1d., of which £2945 14s. passed through the store, and £182 16s. 1d. did not.

At the **Gartsherrie** works, of £4750 5s. 7d. advanced in four months, £4356 18s. 2 ½d. passed through the store, and £393 7s. 4 ½d. did not.'

Of the store at these works, **Mr. Douglas Baird** states,-

"We have had a store here since our works commenced. About 14 years ago we began to sell beer and whisky. Our reason was, that the men were in the habit of going into the village during the day and getting intoxicated. By letting them have whisky, &c., here, we kept a control over them by allowing them to have from the shop two glasses of whisky a day. and no more, and 1 ½d. or 1d. worth of small beer, principally for the furnace men. They are almost universally contented with this. Many of them have expressed pleasure at being prevented from spending more in whisky during the day. If a man at our works gets drunk, we displace-him and put him in a lower situation: we have very seldom occasion to do this. They drink a good deal of cold water. Many have expressed their thanks at having been restricted in the amount of whisky."

At **Carnbroe** the wages for six months were £5131 0s. 5d., and the advances £1467 3s. 10d.

At **Lang-loan** the wages for six months were £1276 19s. 6d., the advances £431 7s. 7d., and the ready money sales to casual customers about £1 per day. With reference to these advances, the clerk stated :-

"Without a store we could not get many of our men to attend the work ; before we had one, they got advances in cash daily from the office, got drunk, and kept their families starving, Many of our good men never deal at the store at all. The man who has his full wages to lift is always the best

workman."

By way of exemplifying a fact which I found universally asserted by the employers, and as universally true wherever I examined the books to verify it, the following instance may be taken, which I extracted from the pay-sheet of this work, for 10th February. It shows the very small sums that some men, earning good wages, have wanted in advance before the pay-day. These small sums they may have been required to lay out in the store, unless, on obtaining them, they stated to the clerk that they wished to lay out the money elsewhere; in which case it would be so entered in the accounts, instead of being debited to the store. The balance between the sum advanced and the total wages would be received by each man on the pay-day, and would be laid out by him, without restriction, wherever he pleased.

Men	Total wages earned as per pay sheet for month ending Feb 10 1844	Total advances received during month
No 1	£3 5s. 0d.	7s. 8 ½ d.
No 2	£2 13s. 4d.	2s. 11 ½d.
No 3	£3 9s. 7d.	15s. 4 ½d/
No 4	£2 13s. 4d.	9s. 7d.
No 5	£3 2s. 6d.	6d.
No 6	£2 13s. 4d.	6s. 8 ½d.
No 7	£7 4s. 6d.	11s. 1 ½d.
No 8	£3 16s. 4 ½d.	9s. 7 ½d.
No 9	£2 19s. 1 ½d.	5s. 5 ½d.
No 10	£3 0s. 6d.	1s. 8 ½d.

In addition to these 10 men, there were 31 whose advances were all under £1; most of them under 10s., and eight from 6d. to 1s.

At the **Clyde** works in the same period, £10,5147. 19s. 5d. was paid in wages: £2,8667. 11s. 8d. was advanced; and on consulting the store books, it appeared that much less than that sum passed through the store from the workmen. The cash sales to other parties amounted to about £670 a year.

The number of men employed in five pits, in these works, was 516. Of these, 193 either drew no sum in advance, as appeared by the pay-sheet for the month ending February 14, or only small sums under 5s.; while 323 had received advances of 5s. and upwards.

At the **Coltness Iron-works**, of £7143 6s. paid in wages, £13107. 10s. was paid in advance. The store account for the six months amounted £1710 0s., the excess being attributable to the confidence of the neighbouring inhabitants in the good quality and reasonable price of the articles sold. The proportion of men whose poverty or improvidence obliged them to receive advances, was, according to a pay-sheet which I examined, as follows : - The number of men entered was 278; of these 101 had drawn sums in advance; 36 of these, however, were sums under 5s.

The proportion of sums advanced to the wages earned by the following description of workmen was-

	Wages – averages per week	Proportion advanced
To Common labourers	10s.	one fifth.
To Colliers	14s. 6d.	half
To Furnace-men	20s. to 35s. and upwards	one third

At the **Monkland Iron and Steel-works**, the wages paid for the same period were £32,263 2s. 1d., of which £10,719 3s. 1d. was advanced. Of this, £9527 5s. 7d. passed through the store, and £1192 did not.

It was stated to me by the manager of these works that-

"The ready-money sales in the store, including chance customers, farmers, labourers, and persons in business residing near, averaged £1 5s. a day. The prices are lower in this store, considering the quality of the goods, than in the common shops; as a proof of which, persons come from Airdrie, a distance of upwards of two miles, to make purchases. No person is dismissed from these works for not dealing at the store. An outcry was lately made on account of our discharging some men whom we did not want, and who were not living in our houses; and it was imputed to us that we discharged them for not dealing in the store. The list which I now hand to you contains the names of those which were discharged, by which it appears that of 21 who were discharged, 12 actually dealt in the store. I refuse advances in cash when I think the money will be misapplied; as in the case of the woman who we have just met, who was nearly in a state of intoxication."

The following statement by **Mr. Robert Stewart**, proprietor of the **Omoa works**, respecting the management of his store, is well calculated to remove the misapprehension which I found prevailing respecting it.

"In autumn of 1836 my men requested me to open a store, gave in their warning, and struck, until I promised them one. I declined once, because I was adverse to the principle of stores. The men stated, that unless I had a store I must raise their wages, as they had to pay so much higher to the shops in the village. I at length built and furnished a store; and the men told me afterwards that a number of the articles sold in the shops of Newart Hill had fallen 10 per cent.; and this the storeman confirmed. I had at that time in my employ between 150 to 200 men; they increased to about 400 in all, after getting the iron-works in 1839. My men have never been compelled to go to the store; the office is 50 yards from the store. The men get advances, and spend what they like at the store; I don't object to their getting paid for their day's work when they have done it. What they have earned is announced at the office every evening; some come and take up the money immediately, minus small sums kept back for house-rent, fire-coal, and medical attendance. We allow the wife sometimes, if she requires it during the day while a man is at work, to come and get the amount of his average day's work; this depends on the character of the females and the men. The wives are in general in favour of the stores, because it enables them to get provisions' regularly for their families when the husbands would spend it in drink. It is against my orders for any clerk or manager to require the people to deal at the store - but we generally look to our people dealing there, simply because it is as cheap as other shops, and we know we give the best articles - the same as I get for my own table. They will not purchase Irish butter; they must have the best country butter, the best meat, cheese, and tea at the same price which I give for my own family, 4s. 8d. and 5s. per lb. I leave the prices to my store-man; I have a good cash sale from the country people round. I know by the return of my store, as compared with the wages paid, that a large portion of the wages earned at my works is not spent at the store. My storeman tells me that frequently they take their money into Hamilton, five miles off, and yet return and spend it in the store, finding they can get things better. In the store they never get bad articles. No shops have been discontinued in consequence of my store - on the contrary, they have increased. The wages that I have paid for the last year average between £800 and £900 a month. The store account for the same time (1843) has averaged about £309 a month; and that includes the cash sales to the country people. We have discharged men lately - but because they were living in houses not our own, and we wanted to fill up our own houses; it had nothing to do with their nor dealing at the store. We were not requiring men - one man thought it was so, and to show him that it was not, I gave him a

preference in taking another job yesterday."

From the above statements, including all the principal works having stores, many obvious inferences will be drawn by any person conversant with the subject. The favourable and justificatory view of the truck system, as here practised, seems to rest chiefly on its value as restraining the intemperance of the least orderly men; on the consequent favour expressed towards it by the wives of such; on the fact that many men in every work do not deal in the store at all; that those only who require advances are expected to lay them out in the store; and that advances in money are to be had by every workmen of good character, on proper application; on the alleged fact of its tending to keep down prices in the retail shops to their proper level; on the acknowledged fact, that in most instances the masters were solicited by their men to establish stores for that very purpose; on their effect in abridging the duration of strikes, which are so often occurring, and are so injurious to the interests of the men as well as the masters. The manner in which this effect is produced is plain. The most improvident, generally also the most idle and the worst disposed, are the men most usually dependent on the store, their provisions being taken up from time to time by the wife, in anticipation of the wages. These men having no credit at the retail shops, because not usually dealing with them, are the least able to sustain a strike, and therefore the earliest to give way.

Another common, argument in favour of the truck system is, that it brings a supply of the necessaries of life to the doors of the labouring classes in localities distant from any market. The experience of the **Shotts Works** disproves the necessity for any such effort on the part of the proprietor; the regular dealers will, in such cases, be anxious enough to supply a demand where any exists. Mr, Charles Baird stated:-

"For the first 12 years we had a store. Our reason was, that we thought the people would be better served ; for we made nothing by it. The people fancied they were taken advantage of, so we gave it up. After this we had frequent petitions to re-establish it, but we refused. We let the store to a man who came and set up a shop there : this was 31 years ago. There were also other shops in the village, so that there was always competition; We gave our tenant no preference by stopping money due to him. All these shopkeepers did well. The man who rented our store has made money, and taken a farm of 250 acres, and is one of the most improving farmers of the district. He has now removed from the store he rented of us, and has built one of his own, and is now about to build houses to let to our work-people; all with gardens attached. We are 12 miles from the nearest market (Lanark, Hamilton, Airdrie, Bathgate, being each about 12 miles off), and the intermediate country is for the most part wild high moorland, very thinly inhabited. We are situated on the ridge, close to the water-shed between the Amond water running east, and the Calder water running west, and 700 feet above the sea level. Though so remote, our supplies are always abundant and regular, and free competition has always kept prices in the shops here nearly on the level of those in the Glasgow market. Even in the worst weather, to which from our elevation we are greatly exposed, the butchers', bakers', and brewers' carts come regularly from the market towns. We have only three shops that sell spirits. Two of these are shut at 10 o'clock on Saturday night, and do not open till Monday morning. My father, Mr. J. Baird, and myself, are in the commission, and no public houses are licensed here without our consent."

How much soever benevolent and well-intentioned masters may incline to justify the use of a store by such reasonings as those above given, the sufficient answer is, that the legislature, by forbidding the practice, has recorded its opinion that on the whole it is injurious to the working classes. The comparatively equitable and modified manner in which it may be managed in some works is no argument in favour of retaining it. Its injurious consequences are numerous, and have been clearly

pointed out in the course of Parliamentary inquiries, the most recent of which is that of 1842. (Report on payment of wages in goods.) It is in many cases equivalent to bringing so much fictitious capital into a trade; and its effect must often be to enable the truck-master to sell at lower prices than can be afforded by the traders who conform to the law. It powerfully encourages the very improvidence among the men which it professes to check. The facility with which provisions of all kinds can be got from the store disposes the wife to take more than prudence would sanction; and as scarcely anything is to be had from those stores but provisions and clothing, a habit is formed, or at least under that system cannot except with difficulty be broken through, of spending the entire earnings in those objects alone which minister to mere animal enjoyment. It cannot be asserted that the most improvident husband would always squander away his wages on receiving them, instead of placing them in the hands of his wife to lay out for the benefit of the family ; but when the practice of relying solely on the store has become habitual, all the valuable experience insensibly accruing to the wife or the children in the process of marketing for themselves is lost. It moreover deprives the labourer of a standard by which to estimate his wages. On this part of the subject, the following passage from Mr. Babbage's work, 'On the Economy of Manufactures,' is worthy of all consideration.

"Whatever may have been the intention of the master in such cases, the real effect is to deceive the workman as to the amount he receives in exchange for his labour. Now the principles on which the happiness of that class of society depends are difficult enough to be understood, even by those who are blessed with far better opportunities of investigating them; and the importance of their being well, acquainted with those principles which relate to themselves is of more vital consequence to workmen than to many other classes. It is therefore highly desirable to assist them in comprehending the position in which they are placed, by rendering all the relations in which they stand to each other, and to their employers, as simple as possible. Workmen should be paid entirely in money; their work should be measured by some unbiased, some unerring piece of mechanism; the time during which they are employed should be defined, and punctually attended to. The payments they make to their benefit societies should be fixed on such just principles as not to require extraordinary contributions. In short, the object of all who wish to promote their happiness should be, to give them, in the simplest form, the means of knowing beforehand the sum they are likely to acquire by their labour, and the money they will be obliged to expend for their support, thus putting before them, in the clearest light, the certain result of persevering industry."—P.609,4th Edit.

It also tempts the master to lower wages indirectly, and is therefore apt to be wed against the interests of the workman in proportion to the unscrupulousness of the master, or the agents whom he may employ.

"The temptation to the master, in times of depression, to reduce in effect the wages which he pays (by increasing the price of the articles at his shop) without altering the nominal rate of payment, is frequently too great to be withstood."—Babbage, p. 309.

The master, it may be supposed, cannot calculate with nicety the precise increase per cent. which he must put upon the price of his goods, to cover his loss by continuing to pay the same rate of wages. He is tempted to .add more than is sufficient, while the workman is kept in ignorance of the amount of alteration made in the real value of his earnings. Its direct tendency, therefore, must be to make all workmen who deal at the store suspicious as long as they remain subject to this power. The profits of retail shops are said ordinarily to be about 7 per cent. There is nothing to prevent the profits of the store, in the hands of a manager little scrupulous of the means resorted to, more than doubling that rate. It is commonly asserted that the profits of many stores in this district reach the

latter point. The very suspicion cannot but be a source of dissatisfaction and ill-feeling, even although that profit may be made in the most legitimate manner, by taking advantage of markets and by ready-money purchases. But by as much as the master is profited through this channel, by so much is his competitor in the same trade, who submits, as in duty bound, to the law against truck, aggrieved.

Another result of the truck system, not less injurious, though not so directly appreciable, is, that by checking the growth of a middle class it reduces the amount and effect of those civilizing influences which descend upon the labouring classes from the various gradations of society above them. The large sum of £200,000 a year, part of the wages paid by the principal works having stores as above mentioned, has been already shown not to be expended in these stores. The growth, therefore, of the class of retail dealers in those neighbourhoods has been considerable, as is proved by the case of **Coatbridge**, where there are at present 134 shops and three inns, besides six shops at **Dundyvan** kept by persons belonging to the works, who deal in the same kind of articles that are sold at the Dundyvan store. It is stated that eight years ago there were only 16 shops open at Coatbridge. The increase is undoubtedly great; but it must not, be overlooked that the profits of the £50,000 a year estimated to be expended at the stores of the enumerated works would, under other circumstances, have been so much added to the fund which supplies the well-being and wealth of the class of retail dealers. It would have promoted *pro tanto* their advance towards the middle ranks of society, and therefore towards filling that void the existence of which is one of the fertile sources of evil in districts new and rapidly peopled.

I found it to be the opinion of several persons of intelligence that the truck system would be abandoned by many employers if the law of arrestment of wages in Scotland were abolished. The operation of this law is very vexatious towards employers, as well as oppressive towards the labouring classes. Small retail dealers encourage workmen to get into their debt by sending agents round the country to tempt them to deal, by giving credit, and offering to receive payments by instalments ; on any failure of these payments an arrestment is immediately lodged by other agents engaged for that purpose, who often leave them with an employer at a venture, in ignorance whether or not the man is in his service. On every arrestment being received the employer is obliged to examine his books, and is liable to have them called for and brought into court, to his great inconvenience. The arrestments delivered at the Govan works (where there is no store) were :-

In June, 1843 ... 94
In September 1843 ... 32
In October 1843 39
In February, 1844 .. 44

These were delivered chiefly by four individuals, most of them by one only. The clerk, who enabled me to make the above extract from his books, stated:—

"We are much troubled with these arrestments. It sometimes takes us many hours to ascertain whether the individual against whom an arrestment is lodged is in our employ. We sometimes have three or four against the same man in a fortnight. The reason is, that a man whose credit is exhausted in one shop will go to another; the facility of recovery encourages the tradesman to give credit heedlessly. The costs are often ruinous to the labouring man, and drive him into reckless habits. The highest sum which can be arrested is £8 6s. 8d. I have known an arrestment lodged to recover 11d., and before the man was 'quitted' the costs amounted to a pound. The arrestments are generally against the same men. The steady men would consider it a disgrace to have their wages arrested. We gave up keeping a store in 1842. In order to give time to the men to save a little

money, so as to begin the fortnight with something in hand, we gave 'subsist' at first three times a fortnight, then twice, then only once. Our men are on the whole very steady."

It was stated to me by several employers that one of their motives in keeping a store was to avoid the trouble and annoyance caused by these arrestments. If one is lodged against a man, they let him have the amount of his wages daily from the store, so that nothing remains to be arrested. In some works the threat of discharging a man is held out, in case any arrestment should be received against him. This is not the place to go fully into an inquiry into the policy of this law; I have merely wished to draw attention to it again, as one of the supposed causes of the maintenance of the truck system. I am aware that some difference of opinion exists upon the point, and that it is alleged that by the abolition of this law the truck system would be encouraged ; that by checking credit in the retail shops, it would give a stimulus to an equivalent extent in the stores. But it must be borne in mind that it is generally conceded that a system of credit and consequent improvidence is at present unduly encouraged by the law of arrestment. This is in itself a great evil; and the manner in which the law can be enforced is a real grievance to the labouring man. After the abolition, men of steady character would continue to obtain credit in the ordinary shops. To the remainder it would be a gain to be relieved from the undue temptations to extravagance, from the unfair dealing, and from the oppressions which the law encourages, even if no diminution took place, as anticipated, in the number of stores. The evidence of **Mr. John Cross**, writer, Hamilton, in the report of the select committee of the House of Commons on the payment of wages, July 1842, (3446 et seq.), and the communications addressed to Mr. Tancred, and published by him in the evidence collected by the Children's Employment Commissioners, pp. 339, 341, strongly support the expediency of altering the law. **Mr. W. Baird**, M.P., one of the proprietors of the largest works in Scotland (the Gartsherrie Iron Works), stated :-

"In my opinion the abolition of the law of arrestment of wages would not have the effect of causing more people to deal in the stores. I should rather anticipate the contrary effect, as many people now deal in the stores to avoid the operation of the law of arrestment who would otherwise deal on reasonable credit in the common shops. The operation of the law, in the encouragement it gives to the habit of living on credit, is injurious to the welfare of the labouring man. The shopkeeper tempts him to deal, in the expectation of paying himself, if necessary, by arresting the wages. Again, when a man has got into debt in the shop, he is obliged to submit to any prices, or any kind of goods that the shopkeeper offers him, since, if he ceases to deal, his wages are immediately arrested."

The man who, either by his own fault or otherwise, is obliged to live on credit, is exposed to disadvantage, whether he deals in the store or in the common shop. In the store he is subject to the risk of being obliged to put up with inferior goods at higher prices, or more of them than he wants, or articles that he does not want. In the common shop, when he once gets into debt, he is subject to all the above risks, with the additional ones of having in some instances to pay a percentage to a third person for procuring him that credit, and to have his wages arrested, and twenty times the amount of the original debt fastened upon him besides. In the mining district of Lanarkshire, wages in ordinary times are fully sufficient to enable any collier or miner of common prudence to accumulate in a few months enough money in hand to place him in a condition to be independent of credit either at stores or shops. Where the custom of the works is to settle with the men at a longer period than fortnightly, it becomes more difficult for them to attain this state of being independent of credit. Where the habits of the men are steady and provident, a fortnightly pay is no disadvantage to them. At the **Shotts Works**, of which the management is exemplary, and the conduct of the men consequently far above the average, out of 210 colliers employed, only one was in the habit of drawing any portion of his earnings before the conclusion of the fortnight. Weekly settlements may, where the works are large, be inconvenient and costly to the master. Where the men are on the

average little inclined to forethought and prudence, a weekly pay would only hold out a temptation for another idle day. In some works they are settled with weekly. The question is one at present under agitation. It is obviously one of those details of management which ought to be subjected to no general rule, and which a conscientious employer will determine in the manner he may think most expedient for the interests of his work-people, and not adverse to his own.

Much anxiety is felt among certain classes of the men that the Truck Act should be enforced. The facility with which it is evaded, as shown in all the above works, seldom affords an opportunity of bringing a case before the law authorities. The select committee of the House of Commons, which examined into the subject in the session of 1842, were unable to recommend any alteration in the present statute. A few contractors for raising iron-stone for the proprietors of the great works keep stores at and near Airdrie. Their proceedings are watched by some individuals of the neighbourhood, anxious to put down the truck system. Those whom I examined appeared to carry on their proceedings in the same manner as their wealthy employers ; and as long as the latter keep stores it cannot be expected that they could interfere to discourage the practice in their subordinates. It is to be hoped that public opinion among the masters themselves will more and more declare itself against the practice ; it is already deemed by many an unworthy employment, and as placing the master in a false position. Nothing can be more irksome to a wealthy and high-minded proprietor of works so extensive and important as those in question, as to find himself lying under the perpetual imputation of cheating his men in such articles as oatmeal and butter. The charge is so openly and perseveringly made, that the proprietors of two of the largest works forwarded to me a list of prices, which will be found in the Appendix (pp. I., II.)

I add another list - a copy of a hand-bill circulated at **Coatbridge**, not as pretending to express any opinion as to which is right, but as showing the kind of accusations to which the proprietors possessing stores are subject. It is further alleged that the storemen, not being men of business, are liable to have goods of bad quality forced upon them by the wholesale dealers; and also that they are tempted, in order, as they suppose, to please their employers, to add to their prices, or to hold out threats to men who do not deal with them. Such accusations were in all cases denied to be true ; and as regards the quality and price of the eatables at these stores, the amount of sales to persons independent of the works was referred to as a proof that no general fault could be found with them. But the very accusations, seldom being capable of immediate and direct disproof, can scarcely be otherwise than painful to those subject to them

I cannot dismiss this subject without adverting to a proposition, which appeared to be under consideration in one quarter, for establishing a truck-shop, in which the men themselves were to have an interest. A scheme of this kind, which at first sight is plausible, and which was adverted to with approbation by Mr. Babbage, in his 'Economy of Manufactures,' (p. 308) has been already tried under every circumstance likely to give it success, and has failed. It proceeded for the space of 14 years at the works of a very extensive manufacturer. I have the accounts of the society (the _____ Provision Company), from 1817 to 1831, now before me, together with a series of curves, indicating prices and quantities prepared by Mr. Babbage, after examining these accounts from the commencement to the termination of the society. I have Mr. Babbage's permission to subjoin, his letter to me on the subject. The arguments adduced will be found to bear strongly upon the injurious effects of the truck system generally.

"Dorset Street, Manchester Square, 4th May, 1844.

To S. Tremenheere, Esq.

My Dear Sir,

I send you the accounts of the Society, and also a pencil set of curves, by which you will see its

quick rise and gradual decline.

I cannot find my notes; but the opinion I expressed in the 'Economy of Manufactures' on the advantage of such societies was very much modified by the examinations I made into the circumstances of this case.

It fell into decay from dishonesty within.

1st. The committeemen (who purchased of the wholesale dealers) being workmen, had little knowledge of the commodities, and the times and modes of dealing in them.

2nd. It was the interest of the factors and producers, who were of course in a higher grade of life, to court the committee men, and by various favours to gain their support. At last the system of bribery became so settled that it acquired a name, and was called 'greasing.'

On the other hand the effects on the people and themselves were very injurious.

The keeper of the shop attended on pay-day at the mill, and his account was deducted from the wages.

1st. The effect of the experience acquired even by very young children, when they are sent by their parents to, purchase small articles, was utterly destroyed. The child, as well as the mother, knowing the shop to be their own, never thought of verifying either the quality or weight of any article ; and thus, when removed to another district, or purchasing at other places, were very deficient in judgment in such points.

2nd. The effect of the non-transfer of money was injurious. A shilling in its visible shape is a very different thing from an invisible shilling written off in an account; as is known to people in a higher station, who have much less reluctance to spend £10 or £20 paid by check, than to count out as many sovereigns.

3rd. The wives were less reluctant to spend money at the shops, because the portion of wages received by their husbands at the end of the week, was more frequently spent in drinking and other luxuries by them, than when the week's expenses were to be defrayed with them.

4th. The little kindnesses between parents and their children which frequently occurred on Saturday night, by giving the child an odd penny or two for its own use when the earnings had been beyond the average, were almost entirely done away with, when the whole affair was, as most frequently happened, a mere transfer from one account to another.

These were the prominent results, and the concern was abandoned, with the joint consent of all parties. Mr. _____, of _____, gave me this document and much information, on, the subject.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

C. Babbage"

But any grievances which the colliers may trace, or suppose they trace, to the regulations imposed upon them by their masters, sink into insignificance when compared with the injurious consequences of the regulations as to labour which they impose upon themselves. It can scarcely be credited by any one calmly investigating the state of this large body of labourers, that many thousands of them, - in fact the whole of the colliers and miners in Lanarkshire, (and many others elsewhere) with few exceptions, amounting to 16,000 men, - have for many years past (since the repeal of the combination laws in 1825) placed themselves under regulations as to the amount of their labour, which, had they been attempted to be enforced by the authority of any government whatsoever in any country calling itself civilized, would have roused the indignation of every thinking man, as against an act of the most intolerable despotism. And yet these regulations were intended by the working colliers, and by those of their own class, with whom alone they take counsel in such matters, for their good ; for the maintenance of wages at a fair level; for their protection against over-work ; and against an overstocking of the market of labour and the market

of coal. Among the many mournful instances recorded in the volumes of Parliamentary inquiries, and elsewhere, of the fatal blows dealt by the labouring classes themselves against their own interests, in attempting, with their imperfect knowledge and necessarily limited experience, to regulate matters which the caution of the most enlarged and mature wisdom shrinks from meddling with, lest it produce more evils than it can hope to cure, this will be found to be one of the most striking. These regulations are based on the irrational principle of allowing no one man to do more work than another; of forcing into an unnatural equality of earnings the young and the old, the strong and the weak, the industrious and the idle. A certain day's work, called "the darg," is fixed, which the colliers themselves allow no one to exceed. The young man, desirous of employing his strength and industry to accumulate a little money before marrying; the young man newly married, and anxious to lay up a little store against the pinching time when he is bringing up his children; the young and industrious and active father of a growing family, wishing to clothe and educate them properly; each of these is allowed to earn no more, though he could get through his quantity in six hours, than the old man who takes 10 hours to do the same work. The "darg" is regulated by the capacity of the elder men, and the younger are compelled to conform to it. They fancy that by thus regulating the "output" of coal, they can regulate prices and wages; although general reasoning would be amply sufficient to demonstrate the impossibility of such a scheme, in the midst of the present unlimited means of opening new coalworks, introducing new men to work them, or supplying markets from various sources. The evidence which I shall adduce most clearly shows that the results aimed at have not been obtained, and that the attempts to obtain them through such a course have been most detrimental to the interests of the labouring colliers.

Under this restrictive system no collier has a chance of saving money and getting out of his trade into some other. There is no relief, therefore, in that manner to the market of labour; but the number of colliers seeking employment is continually being augmented from two sources. The first and most remarkable is, that in their endeavour to evade the operation of their own law, they allow the men who have sons to take them down the pit, and to "put out," with their help, a certain proportion above the "darg," according to the age of the boy, who is reckoned as a quarter, a half, or three-quarters of a man, at progressive stages, until at 16 or 17 he counts as a whole man. This arrangement operates as a direct inducement to early and improvident marriages, and after that to a further over-stocking of the labour-market, by imposing upon every collier a direct motive for bringing up his son to his own calling. The second cause of undue augmentation in the number of colliers is seen in the continual strikes, which are the offshoots of these regulations as to amount of work and rate of payment, and are designed to enforce them upon the masters. These pauses united have of late years added so considerably to the number of working colliers, that it is the opinion of many reflecting persons connected with the district that if these regulations are long maintained the condition of the collier must inevitably sink to the level of the hand-loom weaver.

I proceed to give some details of evidence respecting the commencement and progress of these regulations; the palpable violations of the law which they occasion, by the force and intimidation exercised by the majority in compelling the minority to submit to them; the amount of loss inflicted by them upon the industrious; and the beneficial effects of free labour in the few instances in which the proprietors have been able to emancipate their men from the thralldom of those rules.

William Cameron stated:-

"I began to work as a collier for the Messrs. Baird in 1816. In 18 months after that I was made an oversman, and I have continued in their employ as such ever since. When I was a collier I used to put out six and seven carts of coal at 1s. a cart. A cart contains three hutches. I used to do this in 10 hours. There were 30 men employed with me at that time in the same pit. Four or five young men were making as much as I did. The old men put out four carts a day. Others, according to their

strength, put out five or six.

The first time when the men began to put themselves all on an equality as to work was in 1825, immediately after the Combination Laws were repealed. Since then they have kept to their regulation of not letting one man do more than another.

When the Union began in 1825 the 'darg' was fixed at two carts, at 2s. 6d. a cart. This lasted a year and a half.

After this the 'darg' came to four carts at 1s.; this was in 1827.

This lasted till April or May 1837. At all the works round here the darg was the same. All this time a young man might have put out five carts without hurting himself. During those years there were about 300 men employed about the coal in Mr. Baird's works alone. The black-band began to be worked about 1828-9, which caused the great increase.

In 1837 the great strike took place. Our men stood out 12 or 13 weeks; but we beat them. We got in many new hands, and got the better of those who stood out. They went to work again at our price, and acknowledged themselves to have been in the wrong.

The same 'darg' lasted till within these two years, to the beginning of 1842. They then reduced it to three carts at 1s., making 3s. a day.

A fortnight ago they made another reduction, bringing it down to two carts at 1s., or in other words voluntarily reducing their earnings to 2s. a day.

This was done all at once, 'in a night's time,' after a meeting, in which they were persuaded by some of their advisers.

There was no reason for it; the coal was not worse to work ; there is a demand for much more. The seam is an easy one to work. At this present time, if the young men would work as much as they could do without hurting themselves, they might earn 4s. a day, and the old men 3s. The seam is not so easy to work as it was when the young men could have earned 5s. The roof is now harder, as we have got down deeper.

In all the last three years past the young men might have earned 4s. and 4s. 6d. a day, with moderate work."

Mr. James Baird, Gartsherrie, stated :-

"Twenty years ago the 'darg' was five carts. The men have been reducing it ever since. They have just made a further reduction simultaneously, throughout the whole district, to two carts, thus restricting themselves to earning 2s. a day when they might earn five."

Robert Lumsden, oversman, Dundyvan:-

"I have been an oversman 26 years. The practice of limiting the darg has been in existence for 20 years at least. The men between 60 and 70 can do the limited darg just as well as the youngest, only it takes them a little longer time. That is, the young man loses a great deal of time underground ; he is not so pushing to get his work done. I consider the limiting the darg a very bad thing for the colliers. A young man has no chance of getting forward."

That these regulations are forced upon a large proportion of the colliers against their better judgment, and notwithstanding their clear sense of the injury they receive from them, was openly stated to me by many men, especially the younger ones, in every part of the district. It frequently happens that notice is sent to a pit that the men must cease work, or limit their darg, or attend a meeting. On such occasions, I was informed by several employers, regret is often expressed by many of their men, who are obliged, under fear of ill treatment, to comply. One employer stated to me, February 21-

"I had yesterday 200 men and boys at work at one of my collieries. We had been going on quite harmoniously, and not a complaint had reached me. This morning, as my people were going to

work, they were met by the men of _____ Colliery, armed with clubs, and compelled to return home. My men say they do not wish to join the union or to adopt the plan of limiting the darg; but the rest will force them into it."

Dundas Simpson, mining oversman, Monkland Works :-

"I have been an oversman 16 years, and was a collier before. The 'regulation' has been in existence during all my time. Here, if a man loses a day from accident or illness, or otherwise, he is not allowed by the other men to make it up. I could have saved much more if I had been allowed to 'put out' as much coals when I was a collier as I could. Those who attempt it have their lights blown out, and are annoyed in the pit in various ways. I consider it a most tyrannical rule, and very injurious to the men; but I never knew any attempt by them as a body to break through, it, though many are aware of its injurious consequences. About six months ago, at **Brownsburn Pit**, two men broke through the regulation, and earned 5d. a day above it; putting out one hutch more than the rest. The others sat in judgment upon them, and determined to inflict a fine. I found out this, and told the leaders who called the meeting that if they inflicted it I would discharge them. Yet the two men returned to their usual 'darg' in a week. There are leaders in every pit who regulate these matters. The fines imposed are spent in whisky. If they hold a meeting in the mines, where they always hold their meetings, and fine a man, they come up and don't work that day, which also breaks one of our regulations against holding meetings at all under ground. The fines are sometimes as high as 10s., often 5s. They go to the public house, or take the whisky to the fields or works, and drink it. If an accident of any kind occurs in the pit, they all come up for that day; even if the accident is of a trifling nature. It is a sort of superstitious custom. If a man gets hurt ever so little, they all meet, and home they go. They are the most cruel people towards each other of any class I know. There is a great deal of harsh usage one towards the other, -the stronger against the weaker. They ill-treat each other often. Woe be to the men if they had no masters over them, - they are the worst masters to each other that can be."

An oversman at another work stated :-

"Many of our men would like to break through the regulation; but they have no power over it, as they are obliged to fall in with the majority."

Another stated:-

"A good workman, if he wishes while he is young to do good to himself and his family, cannot get it done, he is so straitened by this rule about limiting the darg."

Dr. Stewart, MD., Coatbridge :-

"By their frequent reductions of the 'darg,' and by the rule which keeps old and young men on an equality as to earnings, many an industrious man is prevented from dressing his family decently and taking them to church, and sending his children to school."

Mr. Robertson, Airdrie:-

"When my men were earning 5s.. to 7s. a day, the young and active among them could earn that in a few hours; consequently they spent many hours of the week in idleness. I believe that many would be glad to see the rule abandoned."

Calculations were furnished me by several experienced persons in the district, by which it appeared that the loss to the young and industrious could not be less on an average than 3s. a week. But the following instances which actually occurred, and which I extracted from the books, show in a marked manner the precise amount of loss so unjustly inflicted upon the industrious, wherever the restriction exists.

At the **Gartsherrie Works** the men, in some of the pits, broke through the rule, and worked without restriction for some months in 1840 and 1841. The result was as follows:-

"Splint" coal, wages 2s. 6d. per ton, month ending September 1840, 42 unrestricted men earned £189; 48 restricted men earned £175. The 48 in proportion to the 42 ought to have earned £216; difference £41. The advantage, therefore, to the unrestricted amounted to nearly 17s. 1d. per month per head.

Soft coal, wages 2s. 4d. per ton, month ending November 1841, 37 unrestricted men earned £170; 57 restricted men earned £229. The 57 ought to have earned £261 17s. 10d.; difference in favour of the unrestricted, £321 or upwards of 10s. per month per man.

Soft coal, wages 2s. 2d. per ton, month ending October 1841, 39 unrestricted men earned £160; 55 restricted men earned £198. The 55 ought to have earned £225; difference in favour of the unrestricted, 10s. per month per man.

Again, the following individual instances were taken from the books of the **Govan Works**, where a Free-labour Society has existed since 1826, the year after the repeal of the Combination Laws. It was established with the view of shielding the men of those works from the injurious consequences which the able and benevolent proprietor, Mr. Dixon, clearly foresaw would result to the men from this mischievous regulation.

Pay-Sheet for fortnight ending 30th December, 1843.

Old men working alone	Amount earned
Robert Laird aged 65	£1 3s. 5d.
J. Jack aged 65 earned.	£1 0s. 2d.
Alexander Anderson aged 60	£1 5s. 0d.
Wm. Clements aged 60	£1 2s. 3d.

Young unmarried men working alone.	Amount earned
Robert Isaac aged 17,	£1 7s. 11d.
James Stevens aged 19,	£1 17s. 2d.
John Penman aged 18,	£1 10s 10d.
W. Fergusson aged 27,	£2 2s. 3d.
J. Nelson aged 24,	£2 0s. 10d.
G. Francis, Irish labourer, who had only recently commenced work as a collier, aged 33	£1 15s. 7d.
Peter Lawson, unmarried, but working alone aged 35,	£2 13s. 7d.

I examined other pay-sheets, containing some hundreds of names, and made many similar extracts, all of which gave results precisely analogous to the above.

A glance at these figures shows the cruel and lamentable loss inflicted by this self-enforced "regulation" upon all the enterprise, zeal, and industry existing in this large body of colliers of Lanarkshire. Their bitterest enemies, if they had any, or the decrees of an oriental despot, could they be subject to them, could devise nothing more contrary to right and justice. The consequences to the large mass of people who have placed themselves under this regulation are numerous. I shall advert presently to its effect in producing an augmentation of the number of colliers, - the very reverse of

that designed by those who uphold it,- and its complete inefficiency to support the rate of wages, as it is intended to do. I would first briefly notice its moral effects upon the people themselves. These are strikingly exhibited in the very different state of the collier population where labour is restricted, as compared with the few localities where it is free. In the former, the collier seldom saves money; partly because his earnings are actually less, partly because his natural energies are repressed and deadened, as must always be the case with men who feel themselves to be compelled to submit to what their common sense and judgment revolts against as an arbitrary restraint. In the latter, the collier is more enterprising and thrifty, more enlightened in mind, and more easy in his circumstances; inasmuch as the energies of his mind and body have had free play. The preamble and the first articles of the **Govan Colliery Friendly and Free-Labour Society**, first published in 1826 (the edition now quoted from is that of 1839), explain the principles on which that Society is founded, and advert to the abuses from which it is its design to protect its members.

"Since the repeal of the Combination Laws in the year 1824, combinations have become the mania of almost every class of workmen. Those who are employed in the well-paid trades monopolize the trade to themselves, to the total exclusion of every other person, thereby creating an evil worse than the legislative enactments of which the working-classes have so long complained. The workmen of Govan Colliery, deeply impressed with a sense of the evil effects of combination to restrict free labour, have resolved to form themselves into a Friendly and Free-Labour Society, for the purpose of supporting each other when visited with sickness or accident, and for their legal and individual protection from the threats and intimidation of the combined, while exercising their just right of working with whom, and on the terms considered best for their individual interests. This society to be called the 'Govan Colliery Friendly and Free-Labour Society.' and each member, on the formation of the society, and on admission afterwards, shall become bound and obliged, and by his entry he binds and obliges himself, to conform to the following regulations for the management thereof:-

Terms of Admission.

Article 1. No person to be admitted a member of this society who is not employed at the Govan Colliery, nor any person who shall belong to any other society whose proceedings or object in any manner of way shall be against free labour; and any person who may gain admission otherwise, upon being convicted of having imposed upon the society, shall be expelled therefrom, and forfeit, all right to the funds. No person to be admitted who is under 16 or above 50 years of age, nor unless they be of good moral character, and free of bodily disease."

The following account of the working of this free system of labour, given me by one of the superintendents of Mr. Dixon's works, exhibits a gratifying picture of the satisfactory manner in which employer and employed proceed together, where both parties are guided by right principles:-

"The result of the free-labour system with us has not been to depress the wages of the collier ; on the contrary, our wages generally are about 3d. a day higher than where labour is restricted. Mr. Dixon regulates the price per cart according to the demand for coal in the market. If the price per cart is reduced, some of our men will make an effort and put out more; for instance, those who have families, in order to keep up their earnings to their usual amount. There are no men in the country quieter than ours are; they live in complete harmony with each other. When we have occasion for fresh men, we take them on the recommendation of those already in our employ. Very few men have left us for works where labour is restricted; those who have generally endeavour to return after a short time. Our collier population is remarkably stationary. We have altogether about 1000 persons below ground, colliers, drawers, and redesmen, and about 100 above ground at the iron works and forges. Many of our men have saved money."

A remarkable proof of the value of freedom of labour, in promoting the prosperity of the workmen, is afforded by the condition of the people at the **Shotts Works**.

Mr. Charles Baird, one of the managers, stated, -

*"In 1837 we insisted on the men breaking through the rule by which they restricted their labour. They stood out against it for four months, when they gave in. Since that, every man has done as much work as he pleased. Many of our men, colliers and others, have saved money. We have had a branch of the Savings Bank here for three years. The amount in it is nearly £600. I believe that 50, at least, of our colliers have saved considerable sums of money. All this is since 1837, for, during the strike in that year, they were stripped bare. In that year we had 150 in our employ. We added 30 in 1842, and 30 more in 1843, so that the savings of any amount have been made by the original 150. Our pays are fortnightly. Only one of our colliers draws his pay before the end of the fortnight. Within the last ten months six of our colliers went away to **Australia**, and three to **Canada**, each with from £30 to £100; also about 26 houses have been built in the village, principally out of the savings of others of our colliers. Mr. Baird aided them with £40. All these have been built since 1841. The members of this Building Society paid 2s. 6d. a week. Each house cost £38. They are double houses, with slated roofs. They are all now inhabited rent free. The £40 lent by Mr. Baird set them going with the building. Rent was paid by those first finished till all were completed. Our oversmen set them the example of saving habits. The letters received from those who have gone to Australia and Canada are very satisfactory.*

On the free-labour system our young men earn from 18s. to 25s. a week. Old men from 14s. to 18s. Under the restricted system the young men would not have been allowed to earn more than probably about 15s.

We have constant applications to take men into our works. We find that the men who offer are the best men to be had anywhere. They are attracted by the liberty secured to them to earn what they can for themselves and families. We have always numerous applications as soon as any reduction of the "darg" is made by the unions. In the last three months we could have filled our works three times over with good respectable hands, who applied, seeing what was going to take place in the west country where the union prevails; some came at night for fear of being discovered by the unionists. There are numbers who are anxious to break through the regulation, but they are afraid, as they would inevitably be ill treated and persecuted by the rest.

Under the free system, since it has been at work here, the wages have been regulated by the prices in the market. We have raised and lowered wages six or eight times since 1837, and never a word said either by the men or the master. Our men work eleven days a fortnight, and very regularly while they are at work, so that the earnings of the men have been much above those in works where labour is restricted. In consequence of the free system we have done our work with a smaller number of hands, but these have been regularly employed. We have not discharged six men during these seven years. One went away voluntarily, but came back after three months. They are very friendly to each other in the pit; no violence is used, or bad language; and as they know that each man can do as much as he likes, there is no jealousy among them."

The large proportion of those colliers who have placed themselves in comfort by careful and saving habits, or have opened for themselves a career of enterprise in the colonies (thereby relieving the pressure for employment in their own neighbourhood, and entering upon a new road to advancement and independence), as well as their proper behaviour to each other in the pits, are plain proofs that the men of these works are, from various causes, advanced above the average grade of intelligence and civilization prevailing among their fellow-workmen in the central district of Lanarkshire. The universal character given of the latter by those most conversant with them, is,

that their improvident habits are notorious, and that violence, severity, and foul language to each other, when below ground, are lamentably prevalent. The common observation is, that a regular bred collier seldom saves anything. When their wages are good, or their condition one of steady prosperity, they are apt to consume most of their surplus in eating and drinking. This is notoriously so in the Coatbridge and Airdrie district. But, even in the comparatively remote and agricultural neighbourhood in which the colliers of the Duke of Hamilton are situated, the same tendency seems to exist.

The manager of the **Avon Bank Colliery**, near **Hamilton**, stated, - "*We have at this colliery 35 to 40 men. The average earnings are 2s. 9d. a day. Most of the men now at work have been born and bred at the Duke's collieries. About December last the colliers of this work and of **Quarter Colliery**, employing 24 men, laid in about 30 head of cows, sheep, and pigs, to salt for winter; they purchased the cows and sheep of the farmers and graziers. They eat meat almost every day; at least those who do not spend their money in drink, who are not numerous. Five of these men have saved money, but none of them began life as colliers. Two were farm servants, one was a weaver, another a forester, another an Irish labourer. One of the first mentioned has saved in less than 20 years enough to enable him to take one of the Duke's farms, and to lay in a stock of 10 or 12 cows and three horses. Twelve of our people keep cows, and all have gardens of a quarter to half of an acre.*"

It is a peculiarity in the history of self-imposed restraints and regulations, that this long-existing plan of limiting the "darg," operating as it does so widely, and involving the interests of so many thousand working men, could not be defended in principle, or be shown to have been useful in practice, by any one individual of intelligence among the men or their employers, whose opinions I sought to elicit on the subject.

An oversman, who had been such for upwards of 20 years, thus expressed himself on this matter:— "*There cannot be a doubt that if the colliers continue this plan of limiting their darg, making it the same for old and young, they will bring themselves down to the level of the hand-loom weavers.*"

The opinion of Mr. Robert Brown, of Hamilton, founded on his long experience as factor of His Grace the Duke of Hamilton, is to the same effect,-

"I am satisfied that the colliers, by limiting their darg, will gradually go down in point of wages to the level of the day-labourer. I prophesied this, at least ten years ago, and I have lived to see many of them glad to get 1s. 6d. a day at making cuttings for railroads, and work of a similar description."

The reasons are plain. Their numbers are being continually increased by improvident and early marriages, and by their habit of bringing up every son to be a collier, by which they seek to evade the effects upon their wages of this very regulation. They are further increased by the combinations and strikes. When the masters find that their men are attempting to impose unreasonable terms upon them, they are compelled to introduce new men into their pits. These are generally Irish labourers, who in a few weeks learn to hew coals, and in time become tolerably expert colliers. The numbers introduced into the various collieries in Lanarkshire within the last few years are stated to amount to nearly 4000, or one-fourth of the whole number employed.*

(* Evidence of Robert Lumsden, 26 years oversman at Dundyvan.

"Every year there is an accumulation of new hands as colliers, caused by strikes ; these hands, in the course of six weeks, will become colliers, i.e., able to put out the 'darg;' they are mostly Irish

labourers. I believe that since 1837, the first large strike, at least 4000 men have come in and stuck to the trade; many more have come in, but have left it again."

When a man refuses to join the union, and tries to get employment in a small work, the men strike rather than let him in." Other estimates place the number brought in by strikes at between a fourth and a fifth of the whole. Loud complaints, on many grounds, pervade the whole district respecting this formidable and injurious influx of Irish labourers.)

There is sometimes a struggle before they are allowed by the other men to pursue their work quietly; but, in the end, law gains the day, and the new hands become permanently engrafted on the trade. The first consequence of this is, that from the superabundance of men seeking employment, a competition arises which tends to bring down the rate of wages. The mistaken ingenuity of this labour-restricting regulation is then relied upon to raise the price of the material produced by making it scarce, and thus to enable the masters to pay higher wages. A great effort is made to bring all the colliers into a combination for this purpose. The conflicting interests and varieties of opinion which generally in no long space of time dissolve the ties of smaller combinations against the public interests, render it next to impossible that extensive ones such as this should be successful. As long as there are intelligent and benevolent masters, who consult the interests and comforts of their men, so long will there be intelligent and well-disposed men who will refuse to lend themselves to plans based on error, contradictory to all sound principles, originating in wrong, and leading to nothing but injury and injustice.

If an artificial scarcity is produced in one place, the market which was accustomed to be fed by that place will draw its resources from another.

Messrs, Baird (Gartsherrie) stated:-

*"When our colliers reduced their "darg" in the winter of 1836 by one-third, earning at the same time 5s. a day, and working only four days a week, the price of coals rose in the Glasgow Market to 8s. per cart, of 12 cwt. The consequence was, that the sale left that port, and the shipping went to Ayrshjre and Fifeshire. ***

At that strike 200 of our men turned out. We brought in Irish labourers, who had been working in the pits as roadsmen (redesmen). In three weeks we had the output of coal increased. We were obliged to protect them day and night. The other men were very savage, and in one instance, not at our works, threw a policeman down a pit, and cut the pit ropes. The next strike was in August 1842. From that time till January 1843 we were obliged to raise wages to 4s. a day, but prices did not justify it, and they came down again at the latter date to the original point, 3s. 6d. a day."

(**Subsequently a strike in Fifeshire deprived some of the coal proprietors in that county of their usual market in various towns bordering on the Baltic. On the cessation of the supply from Fifeshire, the Newcastle coal took its place and retained it until the strike in Northumberland and Durham, which commenced April 5 and has not yet terminated, has afforded an opportunity to the Fifeshire coal to recover its lost market.)

In no instance can the attempt at dictation, as to the amount of wages, be long successful, if founded on no just ground. It can seldom happen that a proprietor will allow his works to be stopped, rather than advance the rate of wages, if the prices he can obtain justify it. There can be no real reason why the confidence and mutual good understanding which has been seen to exist with so much benefit to all parties at the Shotts and the Govan Works, and of which several other examples might be mentioned, should not prevail generally in this district. It appears to me to admit of no doubt, that the first step to be taken by the men with a view to their own interests, must be the

abandonment of this irrational regulation by which they restrict their own labour. I regard their determination on this measure as the turning-point of their future condition. If they adhere to their present system, it appears inevitable that they must decline in physical and moral well-being, until they reach the lowest grade of the population. If they emancipate themselves from it, there is no class of working men who will command better opportunities of comfort and general improvement. The difficulties of escaping from the consequences of unwise conduct are in this case, as in others, amongst its severest penalties. It is very questionable whether the colliers of Lanarkshire are, as a body, sufficiently intelligent to be able to see how deeply their interests are involved in coming to a right conclusion in this matter. Unfortunately it must be deemed more than probable that their habitual distrust of all persons not belonging to their own class, and the lamentable pertinacity with which they adhere to their own ill-formed opinions, will incline them to hold fast to that which is destroying them. But however anxious they might be to escape from the artificial system in which they have involved themselves, into the rational and natural one, the difficulties of so doing would be great, and such as they could not overcome without the aid of their masters. In the words of an intelligent man of their own class,- " The masters must set the matter right for the men, for they have got themselves into a scrape and must be helped out."

The difficulty is, that under their artificial system of restriction, one-fifth more men are at work as colliers than would be required under a system of free labour. (*"With free-labour we could have done, during all the last 18 years that I have managed this colliery, with one-fifth fewer hands"* - Matthew Walker, manager, Quarter Colliery, near Hamilton. A similar calculation was made by many other persons equally conversant with the subject) If every fifth man could be dispensed with, the wages which four might keep to themselves must now be distributed among five; but the fifth man having been brought in by the acts of the other four, it is no easy matter to get rid of him, even were it not unjust to endeavour to do so, precipitately. It might be possible to do so without hardship, by degrees during a period of activity in the various branches of trade and manufactures, when the demand for labour is general, and when those who had left other occupations to become colliers might return to what would naturally be more congenial to them, though the remuneration might be somewhat less. There can be as little doubt that it is for the interest of the masters that the fewer number of men should be employed, as it is for the men that they should be unrestricted in the exercise of their powers and industry. The manager of a large colliery thus described to me the effect of the different systems:-

"The limitation of labour occasions a sacrifice of capital to the master. To keep up the amount of 'output' which he requires, he must have more men; he has therefore more roads to keep up, more rails to lay down, more roofs to attend to; perhaps another pit must be opened. Besides, the good collier can do with far less timber; he knows when it is prudent to prop, and when it may be omitted. Also, he makes far better coal, i.e., less rubbish in proportion to the large coal. He knows his duty, and there less squabbling with the oversman. With indifferent men the work is longer in doing, and the machinery must be kept going a longer time. Under a free-labour system we should retain only the best men, and keep them steadily at work, which would be far better for themselves, as well as their employers."

The, Messrs. Baird thus summed up the effects of a return to a natural system:-

*"The consequence of unrestricted labour would be, that the same output would be made by fewer men in the course of the year.
The best men would be retained, and the total wages divided among them.
The indifferent hands would find occupation elsewhere, at the kinds of labour to which they had been before accustomed."*

These hands would never have been in but for the restricted darg."

Another proprietor of coal and iron works, stated:—

"My opinion is, that under a system of free labour the earnings of the men would not be diminished. In times of bad trade prices would fall. At such times it is the interest of the men as well as the master that the article should be sold at the lowest rate to encourage demand. A lower price per ton might be paid to the men, but they might, by a little extra exertion, put out more. The lower price paid in wages by the master would enable him to extend his sale.

When a brisk demand returned wages would rise again.

But even granting that when demand is slack, wages fall; the workman in that case is only in the same plight as the master. Both may be expected to suffer when trade is dull.

At all events, nothing can be so irrational as that the men should attempt to keep wages high when demand declines. The only effect of this is to endanger, and often actually to cause, the loss of the trade altogether, as happened to myself in 1836-7."

In 1826 the Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to inquire into the effect of the Act 5 Geo. IV., c. 95 (repealing the Combination Laws), thus reported.

After showing the extent of combination among the coopers, weavers, shipwrights, and colliers, the Committee states that-

"They cannot but anticipate the fatal results the working classes are bringing upon themselves by a perseverance in the course in which they are engaged. They derive hope from their confidence in the good sense and good dispositions of by far the greater part of those who, mistaking their own interests, are now enrolled amongst the members of those combinations."

Eighteen years have elapsed since these words were put on record. Two-thirds of the then existing generation of colliers in Lanarkshire have since passed away, and their places have been supplied by others. The combinations, so far from declining, have extended, and their fatal effects to those who lean upon them have been brought more near. The "good sense" to which the Committee of the House of Commons looked in 1826 with hope and confidence has failed to shield the generation which has since arisen from the errors of their predecessors. The obstinacy with which they cling to them is their misfortune. It can excite nothing but sorrow in any well-constituted mind. In their present, very imperfect state of knowledge, with their very limited means of tracing effects to their true causes, and following out causes to their remote consequences, they have undertaken to lay down principles and adopt regulations respecting the most complicated social interests, which cannot be rashly and unwisely interfered with without bringing down the first, the severest, and the most permanent suffering upon themselves. It is painful to know that the very hastiness and immaturity of judgment (not to call it by any harsher term) which has brought them into this course, and which leads benevolent and well-meaning men, their advisers, to seek to retain them in it, is the main obstacle to their freeing themselves from it. Their prejudices and their errors, arising from the want as much as the neglect of early opportunities of instruction, entitle them to much forbearance and consideration. The most serious efforts of their most intelligent friends and employers, could they have confidence in their advice, would be not less than what is now indispensable, to aid them to escape from the unnatural and injurious system of restriction in which they have involved themselves.

Want of Churches and Schools

The want of churches and schools in the **Coatbridge** and **Airdrie** neighbourhoods, which was

commented upon at length by Mr. Tancred in his Report, still exists to a great extent. In the former place (as also at their colliery at **Holytown**), the Messrs. Baird have very amply fulfilled their duties to the large population which they have gathered round their extensive works; having first built and endowed a spacious and handsome church at Coatbridge, the patronage of which they have transferred to the presbytery of the district; and having subsequently erected (chiefly at the expense of W. Baird, Esq., M.P.), a large stone building capable of accommodating four considerable schools. To this also they propose to attach an endowment.

"It is to comprise four schools. There will be four teachers, one of whom will be a female. A school conducted by a female, with the view to teaching girls domestic work and management, is quite a new thing in this district, which may account for the bad domestic management, of colliers' wives in general. The schools will, we hope, be opened in about two months. The superior branches of education will be taught there, as well as the common branches for the work people. We had a 'preaching station' here for three years before the established church was opened (and we paid the minister £200 a year. He resided on the spot. The episcopal chapel was also opened in April last. It was built by the subscriptions of Mr. Wilson, General Douglas (who also contributed to the endowment), ourselves, and others."

The school attached to the **Drumpeller Colliery**, as well as three or four "Adventure" schools, all in or near Coatbridge, were well filled, and appeared to be creditably conducted. They are not yet, however, sufficient in number for the real wants of the population. Mr. Wilson of **Dundyvan** had taken steps for building a handsome school near his works. The proprietors of the **Summerlee Iron Works** were also understood to be contemplating the formation of a school for their work people. A large school-building has been erected by the proprietors of the **Carnbroe Iron Works**, and much pains had been taken to secure efficient teaching. A library attached to the school for the benefit of the work-people contained many standard works, which had been much read. In the town of **Airdrie**, there were in attendance at 16 schools for the labouring classes, in March last, 905 children, while there was accommodation in those schools for 1500. The books in use besides the Bible were M'Culloch's, Leitch's, Chambers's, those of the national school, &c. The Rev. Mr. Begg, minister of the parish, stated that there was not so much a want of schools as of endowments and support to the masters. Considering the large population surrounding Airdrie, which itself contains 12,000 people, the number of children attending these schools forms but a small proportion of those who ought to be under instruction. At the Drumpeller Works above mentioned, all belonging to them contributed to the school; the married men 2d. a week, the unmarried, 1d. The school had been opened a year and a half, and was conducted by a master and assistant teacher. Though the compulsory payment induced many parents to send their children who otherwise would probably have neglected it, yet I was informed that many others kept them away under frivolous pretexts, and appeared insensible to the value of the good instruction and salutary discipline of which their children might have had the benefit. In other parts of the district a more just appreciation seemed to exist among the people of the benefits of the education held out to them ; the greater in proportion to the length of time during which these opportunities have existed. Respecting the **Shotts Works**, Mr. Chas. Baird stated :-

"Our population at the works is above 2000. We have had a school since the commencement, 43 years ago. It is an endowed school. 20 years ago we built one of our own. There are at least 200 children at the two schools, and about 100 more at the evening school. Also about 30 at three other schools kept by females for the younger children. At one school the master's wife teaches sewing, &c. Some of our boys also go to a superior kind of school two miles off, where they learn Latin and French. We have several people at the works now who are good Latin scholars. Some of our colliers are very well educated. Two youths, sons of our work people, have become surgeons; two,

clergymen; one has become manager of the Marquis of Lothian's collieries. There is a library for the work people, and a Sunday-school library for the children. We are 3 ½ miles from the parish church; but in summer our people attend very regularly. We have preaching also in the school-room once a fortnight. There are also meeting-houses two miles off, which many attend. The conduct of our people on Sundays, and indeed at all times, is very exemplary. The minister has a parish ten miles long by six broad, with a population of 4500. It takes him a long time to visit all these; but many are regularly visited three or four times a year. The dissenting ministers do not visit unless they are sent for. Our works have grown up gradually. We have had no sudden increase of population at any time, though the increase within the last eight years has been more rapid than in the previous eight (We began with one blast furnace. The foundry commenced a year after. At first we used about one ton of iron per week in the foundry. It has gradually increased to 10 tons for manufactured articles. Our coals are only worked for our own use. We consume 200 tons daily.). About 10 years ago we established a 'Board of Health,' consisting of our oversmen and about 18 of our most respectable workmen, six of whom are colliers. These visit all the houses periodically, and report any want of cleanliness, so that all our houses are kept in very decent order. The 'board' also visit with the view of seeing persons requiring relief. All the people about the works subscribe. We distribute blankets, &c. &c., to any person in distress."

Much attention is paid to the subject of education by the proprietors of the **Monkland works**. Their schools contain 540 boys and 148 girls. Two out of the three boys' schools are taught by regularly trained masters. The girls' school was not assembled at the time of my visit. I was informed that it is under the superintendence of a mistress of superior qualifications, whose influence on the manners and habits of the children cannot fail to be of great value. A taste for mental resources appears to be making progress among the colliers of this locality. Theatrical performances had lately been exhibited for three nights, the majority of the actors being young colliers. The performances consisted of Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd ; the Castle Spectre ; and How to Raise the Wind. The play-bills were printed in the usual form. A barn was fitted up for the occasion. Recently, also, an application was made to one of the managers for aid towards setting on foot an instrumental band. Many of the performers had been practising for the last six months. Many of the young men also, who have left school, volunteer their services as teachers at the Sunday school; upwards of 200 attend in winter at the three evening schools. The favourable condition of many of the men belonging to these works, who possess houses and gardens of their own, has been fully described by Mr. Tancred. Their number is increasing. A school has been attached to the Govan Works since their commencement. Every person employed pays 9d. a month for every child in his family above six years old and under 12; or, if girls, until 10; boys under 12 may attend the night school free. The school-building is spacious, and the attendance considerable, but the school was not assembled when I visited the works. Its fruits were, however, visible in the existence of a well-arranged library of 1253 volumes, comprising many of the best works in the language.

The preamble to the regulations and catalogue of this well-selected and extensive library deserves to be pondered over by those colliers, unhappily so large a proportion of the whole body in this district, who waste their resources in sensuality, and diminish them by restricting their own and each other's labour.

"The members of the Govan Colliery Friendly and Free-Labour Society, with the view of providing the means of useful information, have resolved to form a library at Govan Colliery, to be supported by quarterly payments and annual donations from the funds of the society," &c. &c.

These payments are, for the working colliers, 6d. per quarter.

The library is open every evening; it is furnished with a long reading table, and is well lighted and warmed.

The full account given by Mr. Tancred of the institutions established by the proprietors for the benefit of these works, and their salutary effect on the people, need not be here repeated.

There is also at the **Clyde Iron Works** a school of 160 children, together with a large evening school. The charge, deducted from the wages of all who have children, is 10d. per month per child, but four are only charged as three; the books used were those of the Irish Commissioners, geography books, and history. The subscription to the library, which is optional, is 4d. per month. Many of the books were of standard excellence. There were 70 readers, full half being colliers.

At these works the houses are good, the people stationary, and their habits were described as, on the whole, satisfactory. Steady men were earning from £3 to £3 4s. per month ; others from £2 to £2 16s. ; the proprietors were very little troubled with arremts of wages. The contracts and pays are monthly.

One of the persons in authority at these works stated -

"Though the men are under the regulation as to restriction of labour, they do not act upon it very strictly ; the young men put out more coals than the old. They have made no alteration since 1836. During the strike of 1837 we introduced many new hands, some of whom, however, dropped off again when wages fell; still many remain who learned to be colliers at that time. The fear of having more brought in, helps, with their previous experience of the ill effects to themselves of these strikes, and, I believe, also with their improving intelligence, to keep the rest quiet. We seldom have any complaints ; the 'pulling' is done for the men by us; and the roads and whirleys kept up. The deductions are - for doctor, per month, 7d. For a family; 4d. For a single man ; rent of double house, 4s. ; single, 2s. 6d.; school, 10d. per child, or 2s. 6d. for four; pick sharpening, 1s. We have no store. There are two joint-stock victualling societies in the village, the capital for both furnished by the men. One is supported entirely, one in part, by the people of these works. There are many other shops in the village. The church, which is close at hand, is well attended."

All these instances show that the working colliers, under right government, are as capable of advancing themselves to a satisfactory state of intelligence and well-being as any other part of the labouring population. The kind and considerate and liberal treatment which takes care to exempt them from many of the unfavourable circumstances with which their situation is too often surrounded, which wisely and firmly opposes itself to their errors and prejudices, and seeks to remove them by good guidance, encouragement, and right instruction, will, in their as in any other case, be rewarded by reciprocal benefits to themselves and their employers.

But these favourable instances are on the outskirts of this thriving district, where the growth of the population has been gradual, and the proprietors have exercised a judicious forethought,; not in the centre of the district, where the growth has been rapid, almost without example, and the people left, nearly altogether, to take care of themselves.

In the central parts of the district, at and around Coatbridge and Airdrie, the state of things, as very imperfectly described in the foregoing pages, can be regarded with satisfaction from only one point of view, that, which contemplates the merely material results,- so much human labour, producing in a given time so many hundred thousand tons of iron. Looking at it on any other side, taking into view the morals, the religion, the domestic habits, the domestic state, the intellectual condition, the

common feelings and behaviour of the people towards each other or towards their masters, each and every mark and test of a rightly constituted state of society, - under this aspect, no one can be disposed to disregard the serious thoughts which it suggests.

A healthy state of society can spring from no other source than the family life of the people. The relation between parents and children is "the first among the elements of natural morality." A prudent care and watchfulness on the part of the parents, over the formation of the habits and character of their children ; a readiness to sacrifice time, ease, self-indulgence, to the paramount duty of bringing up their offspring in the knowledge and practice of religion and virtue ; and on the part of the children, affection, respect, deference, obedience; these reciprocal feelings and duties lie at the very foundation of social order and well-being. Where they exist not, the very heathens proclaimed that society was in a career of dissolution. Out of them, where they are duly cultivated, and have fair scope to unfold themselves, grow all the virtues that make a people respectable.

This "elemental training," begun in the cottage, makes itself felt through all the gradations of society. Early taught to pay respect and deference to their parents, children, as they advance in years, become sensible that they neglect a duty in not paying it. They feel humiliated in their own estimation if they neglect it. To preserve a sense of respect for themselves they will discharge the duty. The same self-respect which forbids them to omit this duty to their parents will lead them to show it to others equally their superiors, though standing in a different relation. "The first mark of a real self-respect is to pay the deference that is due to others." (Burke) Such a man, feeling what is due to himself, recognizes the just title of his superior. His own is recognized in turn; mutual respect is felt and shown, and society is softened and harmonized. The feeling, founded on a true principle, and operating generally upon the manners, is directed naturally with especial force, in the case of the labourer, towards his employer and master. It gives rise to mutual confidence, which in due time warms into attachment, and confirms the bond of mutual interest and sympathy. Hence it spreads into a wider circle, and embraces more general considerations. "We begin our public affections in our families; we pass on to our neighbourhood, and habitual provincial connexions;" (Burke) and from them to "those higher and more enlarged regards" which lead to a veneration and love for the institutions of our country.

Now this favourable condition of family life, out of which spring, in a natural order of gradation, all the healthy moral and social relations, can scarcely be said to exist, or exists but in insulated cases, in this central part of the mining district in Lanarkshire. The houses in the Colliery villages, crowded into rows or squares, are themselves crowded with inhabitants. Their form, and the amount of accommodation, are not such as to allow of much, if any, separation of the sexes, especially where there are lodgers. Insufficient accommodation within, and the absence of all separate enclosures or gardens to each dwelling, occasion all the children, when out of doors, to mix together indiscriminately. Vicious habits are thus rapidly formed and disseminated. The neglect of the mother shows itself in the extremely dirty appearance and filthy habits of the children.; the sensuality of the father, perhaps of both, in refusing to deny himself some animal enjoyment of eating and drinking, for the sake of keeping his children at school. The money spent in whisky on the pay-night alone would, in most cases, pay for the schooling of one child at least for a month. The ignorance of the mother in most points of good domestic management, - the selfishness, the ignorance, the bad example of the father, - cause "the reins of domestic authority" to be altogether loosened. Children who are allowed to grow up without being controlled by, grow up without respect for, their parents. Parents who can rest content with a dirty and comfortless home, and can see with insensibility their children increasing before them in disobedience, ignorance, and depravity, have lost that "decent pride" which is the mainstay of national character. "In a family no longer protected by a decent pride there is but one step to a frightful corruption." - (Burke.)

Dissoluteness of life, rudeness of manners, and contempt for the authority of parents, lead immediately to contempt for, and opposition to, and distrust of, the legitimate authority of masters. If a due subordination has not been learnt at home, it will be little practised elsewhere. The relaxation of domestic is the relaxation of all other authority. If the inferior is never taught due respect to the superior, immediate insolation is the consequence. When every man thinks himself "as good as his neighbour," the superior refuses to acknowledge this imaginary title in the inferior; both parties therefore stand aloof. And from this state of insolation to open hostility the descent is rapid. From disaffection towards employers and masters, to disaffection towards institutions under which masters and men alike live, the progress is, as has been shown, simple and logical.

Next to the corrupting influences arising from the manner in which the people are collected together and lodged, a further cause of the "relaxation of that natural discipline which is the soul of a rightly-constituted state of society," may be recognized in the absence of all, or nearly all, corrective or superintending authority from without. The masters, in general too much occupied to attend to the moral habits of the people, and not having provided means by which, this duty should be well and sufficiently discharged by others, have left their people "to take care of themselves." This is at once to abdicate a large portion of their legitimate influence, to repel the ready sympathies of their dependents, and to throw them back on other and casual friends and advisers. Society appears therefore, in this district, to be much in the condition described by the Roman historian, whose words may be thus paraphrased:- "It has not grown up, like society in its ordinary state, gradually, and with a simultaneous increase of all ranks and conditions, bound to each other and to the state by mutual connexion, subordination, and attachment; but a mass of people has been suddenly brought together, from different and distant localities, unknown to each other, without guidance or control, without mutual relationships and affections, thrown upon one spot as outcasts, a herd rather than a society."

The moral superintendence and corrective authority which the masters have not had leisure to exercise themselves, might have been, with the best effect, delegated from the beginning to others properly qualified for the arduous task. To fulfil the part of moral guide and true friend to a people living under every temptation to sensuality which generally good and often abundant wages, unlimited facilities of obtaining ardent spirits, crowded houses, and the want of mental resources, can supply, requires the devotion of a life passed in perpetual contact with such a people in their hours of leisure and at their fire-sides. It is only thus that their particular errors can be understood and combated, right reasoning set before them, and right feelings substituted for wrong ones. The mind and heart of the uninstructed expand themselves under such intercourse, in obedience to the natural craving of the human understanding for communion with an intelligence superior to its own. It is the clergy alone, whose position and qualifications inspire the confidence that enables them to discharge this difficult duty. It would have been no more than justice to the well disposed, who had been attracted to this district from their distant homes, that they should have found provided for them, on their new scene of labour, the ministrations of that Church Establishment to which the Scottish national character is so deeply indebted; which has been so mainly instrumental in nursing the national mind into a state of intelligence, that, affords to the capitalist the most valuable of his resources. But judging from the interminable troubles and perpetual losses which ignorance and bad feeling combined have inflicted upon the proprietors, it would seem that, on the grounds of calculation alone, it would have been desirable to have supplied agents competent to deal with the moral phenomena which such a state of society could not fail to engender. Such men, invested with the sacred character, and with the influence inseparable from ministers of the establishment, especially upon those not yet gathered into any Christian fold (no slight number), would from the beginning have devised modes of checking the spread of corruption, would have aided in raising the standard of that "moral taste," in regard to the decencies and comforts of domestic life, which

disposes the mind to virtue,—would have counselled the adult and instructed the rising generation. How much prejudice might they not have removed from the minds of the people; how much ignorance might they not have cleared away ; how many of its injurious results prevented ; how much light could they not have thrown upon the many social and economical problems that perplex the partially-instructed; how much vanity and presumption, "the certain attendants upon all those who have never experienced a wisdom greater than their own," might they not have reasoned down; how much improvidence restrained; how many of the virtues most valuable to the labouring man, - honesty, prudence, forethought, temperance, frugality, self-denial, steady industry, just obedience,- might they not have inculcated! While labouring to enlighten and reclaim the lower orders, an independent clergy would not have allowed a course of selfish and injurious neglect of Christian duty to go unreprieved in any other. It is not unreasonable, also, to believe that their mediatorial influence would often have been most beneficially exerted in softening asperities between masters and men, in explaining misunderstandings, and in causing the removal of any real grievances which either thoughtlessness or wilfulness may have occasioned.* Every effort in this direction could not fail to be most salutary. It would tend especially to bring into harmony parties whose real interests are identical, and who are never at variance without inflicting mutual, perhaps irreparable, injury. It would afford the best hope of remedying past neglect, and making the moral face of things correspond with the magnificent spectacle of vast material wealth, so recently called into existence by the combination of skilful enterprise and persevering labour.**

(* The Act just passed, relative to the subdivision of Scotch parishes, will doubtless facilitate the establishment of more clergy in such districts as the one now in question. But where a population is suddenly collected together, and the erection of a church would be difficult, the principle sanctioned by the English Act of last year, of appointing a clergyman to a district before erecting a church, would be applicable.

**The appointment of occasional preachers, as has been practised in a few instances, or of dissenting ministers, on the ground that a certain number of the workmen belong to a particular sect, is a very imperfect substitute. The occasional preacher cannot make himself much, acquainted with the people at large by conversing with them at their houses. The dissenting ministers do not visit generally in their district: but confine themselves, with few exceptions, to their own hearers.)

An increase of schools would follow an increase of clergy. If the state of the population of Scotland in 1669 made necessary the Act of that year for endowing schoolmasters in every parish (and the state of religious feeling at the time happily made it possible), the present condition of the population renders the extension of the principle of that Act equally necessary, though unfortunately the religious differences prevailing so generally among the middle classes oppose what appears to be almost an insuperable barrier. It remains to be proved whether the sense of duty on the part of individuals to do what they will not permit the State to give effectual aid towards doing, and the sense of danger at leaving it any longer undone, will prevail over the lukewarmness, if not indifference, which the unremitting pursuit of wealth is apt to encourage. The new schools should be presided over by men capable, by their position and acquirements, of really discharging the high duties of education in its widest sense ; of forming the mind and character, as well as of imparting mere knowledge; and they should be well acquainted with those methods and arrangements in the details of school management which the training institutions of the country sanction as facilitating the task of teaching. To secure such men, ample remuneration is necessary; and they are obviously wanted most where the population is least disposed to incur the cost.

The quantity of improveable land in the immediate neighbourhood of most of the colliery villages of Lanarkshire seems to point out the facility with which garden allotments might be attached to schools, to be cultivated, as in many schools of industry in England, during the hours of relaxation. It has now been ascertained that in the numerous instances where this admixture of school

instruction and industry has been introduced, it has not only been the medium of conveying much valuable practical information to the children, but has caused their parents to allow them to remain longer at school, and to attend more regularly. In my paper on Schools of Industry, in the volume of Minutes of the Committee of Privy Council on Education for 1843-4, I have given an account of schools of this kind, in some of which the children are not only well instructed in all the ordinary branches of education, but are able to pay the cost of their schooling out of the produce of their labour, and to retain a surplus of several shillings a year for themselves. The schoolmaster is also able to add to his own salary by cultivating a piece of land with the aid of his boys, who are paid a fair sum for the work done by them. In Scotland, where cottage gardening is not so well attended to as might be expected from the progress that has been made in agriculture, such garden-schools would raise the standard of taste and knowledge on a subject of essential interest to the cottager ; teaching him how to increase his gratifications and improve his resources. It would also, in the hands of an able master, be the vehicle of imparting much information of great utility to the future farm-labourer, making him a more intelligent and valuable servant. Had any opportunities of acquiring a taste and knowledge of this kind existed in the mining district of Lanarkshire, it may not unreasonably be concluded that the abundance of improveable land above referred to, in many localities close to the colliers' dwellings, would not have lain so long neglected. The materials for improvement are close at hand,—tile-works, lime, and other manure.

Cottage gardening, and societies to promote it, giving countenance and encouragement to those wives who kept their cottages neat and clean, and brought up their children well, would give material aid towards effecting the first great point, —the raising the aims, the intelligence, and the habits of the mother.

Many steady colliers, in various parts of the district, cultivate from half an acre to an acre of land, during their leisure hours; some have more. It affords a satisfactory resource against periods of low prices and low wages, and is at all times a valuable preservative against intemperance and other debasing pleasures.

As to the continued employment of females in the Mines

The number of females employed in the mines of Lanarkshire, before the Act passed, did not much exceed 200. The greatest number employed at any one work was 70, at the **Shott's Iron and Coal Works**. The following statement was made to me by Mr. C. J. Baird, one of the managers:—

"When the Act passed we had 70 females down the pits. Most of them worked with members of their own family. The only disadvantage to the men from the change is, that if they would put out the same quantity of coal they must work longer, or pay a boy to help them. When they had the women to help them they worked eight to nine hours a day ; now they work from 10 to 11, earning the same amount per week. In the case of the men who had no females of their own, and were obliged to hire, it is a gain. They paid a woman 1s. to 1s. 3d. a day. If they lengthen out their hours, as the others do, they are gainers to that amount, by 'putting' their own work. Between 20 and 30 were supporting aged parents, or themselves, having none to help them ; and some girls, orphans, were supporting their younger sisters. All the females at our works can read, write, sew, knit, and tambour."

The Shott's Works are situated near the ridge of a line of high moors, 700 feet above the level of the sea. They are also 14 miles from the nearest town. In such a situation, females have but few opportunities of getting employment. On the 8th of March, on visiting these works and the cottages, with Mr. Baird, I observed many instances of much privation caused to the latter class of females, by the loss of the occupation to which they had been brought up. On the 19th of July I received a

letter from Mr. Baird, expressing regret that about 20 of these females had secretly renewed work in the pits, - the facilities for so doing being great in two of the pits, which are accessible by stairs. Mr. Baird states -

"We have no difficulty in preventing women from going into the pits without stairs, of which we have four, as for these we make the pit-head men responsible ; but in the two coal-pits with stairs, which are by far the most extensive, we have found it a very difficult matter, as rather than not work I find they rise and go down before daylight; and, while the oversman is down, they manage to keep out of his way ; and in consequence of the people all commiserating them for being thrown out of employment, no one will give a hint of anything of the kind going on."

Mr. Ch. Baird expresses a determination to cause the law to be observed. The judiciousness, kindness, and liberality which have hitherto characterized the management of these works, afford a guarantee that every effort will be made gradually to draft off into other employments those upon whom the deprivation of the only one to which they had been accustomed falls most severely.

Employment of Boys

I communicated frequently with Messrs. **Miller and Addie** on the subject of the continuance of the females in employment in their pits at **Rosehall** and **White-rig**; also with the proprietors of the **Faskine-hill** Colliery; and subsequently with the Procurator Fiscal of Airdrie, in relation to these and other cases.

In order to prevent the men taking their boys down the pits before the age allowed by the Act (10 years), they are compelled at many of the works to make a declaration of the ages of their children; or inquiries are made by the oversmen to ascertain the fact. I could not learn that they were generally disposed to take their boys to work into the mine before the prescribed age. The number of hours during which the boys stay below varies at different works. At some they go below with their fathers, use the pick for an hour or two in the morning, and then draw the coal, staying down to complete the day's drawing after their fathers have left work. At others, boys and men go down and come up together. Elsewhere, the boys go down after, and come up with the men.

Meals &c

Skill in working the coal is so soon acquired, that it is to be regretted that boys are taken into the pits before 12 years old; or that they should be allowed to work there before they can pass an examination in the common rudiments of education, to the satisfaction of the proprietor, or of some person duly authorized by him. Regularity of meals, and a sufficient time for them, were points not as commonly attended to as is desirable. The practice at the **Gartsherrie** works, with respect to limiting the time of the engine, allowing a stated time for dinner, and as to the kind of cages used in drawing, is worthy of notice.

"Our engines for drawing coal begin at between six and seven, and all the coal is drawn between four and five o'clock. We stop one hour (12 to one) for dinner. Very few of our men go down before five or six. There is no occasion for any man to go down earlier, because a steady man will always have a stock of coal in hand, ready in his 'room' for being drawn as soon as the engine begins to draw. There is no excuse for any man not having this, even the oldest. I have seen men having 15 carts, or a week's work at five days a week, lying in their rooms ready. All industrious good men have some such store or other.

The cages we use are covered, and work in a slide. This kind of cage will be universally adopted in Scotland, from their economy both in wear and tear, and in wood. Ours have also a sheet-iron cover: this cover not only protects the people from anything that may happen to fall, but it acts as a

parachute, and men have fallen 30 fathoms (the rope having broken, as at Dundyvan) without sustaining injury. These slides and cages occasion a great saving also to the collier, as the hutch in which they draw their coals to the bottom of the shaft is pushed at once into the cage, and drawn up immediately ; the labour of filling into the old tubs, as before, being now saved. These cages were introduced from England about two years ago, by Mr. Cuningham, of Carnbroe. We have used them about a year." - (Mr. D. Baird, Gartsherrie.)

Accidents

No record being kept, by any public authority of the number of fatal accidents occurring in these mines, it is difficult to arrive at a knowledge of their exact number. The impression, after numerous and minute inquiries, was that, considering the number of persons employed under ground in the county, and the risks to which they are exposed, the sum of fatal accidents is not great. There can be little doubt, also, that very many of the whole are attributable to the carelessness of the people themselves. Imputations that they are often caused by some employers not furnishing a sufficient supply of props, are easily thrown out and not very capable of being substantiated. The character of the proprietors and employers in this district is a sufficient security that no such unwise and cruel economy would be thought of for an instant. It is a lamentable proof of the alienation of feeling that has arisen, that any master should be believed by his men to be capable of such a species of neglect. As there is no such office in Scotland as that of coroner, it is worthy of consideration whether, when any accident of a fatal nature may occur, the employer should not be required to send immediate notice to the Procurator Fiscal of the district, who should institute an inquiry into the circumstances, and take proper proceedings therein, in case of culpable remissness being chargeable against any responsible person. The question was fully entered into by Mr. Tancred, and the valuable opinions collected by him on this question will be found in his Report.

Working on Sundays

The practice of working on Sundays is confined to the men employed about the furnaces, and varies at the different works. At the **Gartsherrie** works it has been altogether discontinued. Mr. D. Baird states,

" Our works stop on Sundays at 6 a.m., and commence again at 5 p.m. We find no disadvantage in this as to the working of the furnaces. Five men are set at liberty, to each furnace. No work whatever is done, as a rule, on Sunday, There are no people within our gates on that day but watchmen."

At the **Dundyvan Works**, the men who attend the furnaces are stated by Mr. J. Wilson, junr., to be spare men; and the same are not employed every Sunday, so that they are not always deprived of the opportunity of attending divine worship.

At the **Carnbroe Works** it was the opinion of one of the managers, that in making foundry iron, which is the general trade of this district, it was essential that the furnaces should be constantly supplied with the blast, to maintain the requisite heat. If supplied with the blast, they must also be fed. If the furnace cools a little, the iron congeals round the " tuyeres," and the labour of an additional man is required in the next 12 hours to clear them. At these works 18 men are employed on Sundays, that is, nine men to two furnaces. All the materials are laid to their hand the night before. They can go to church once a fortnight at the usual time. Evening service is held expressly for them in the school-house every Sunday. They leave work at 6, and the service begins at 7.

The number of men employed, and the provision made for their attending a place of worship in the evening, are considerations obviously of no importance, when compared with the violation of the command which consecrates the sabbath, and assigns it as a day of rest. The open disregard of this

command, which from the nature of the work proclaims itself to a whole neighbourhood, is too apt to be seized upon by the sensually inclined, as a sanction for their own indulgences on that day. On the other hand, the example of implicit obedience to it, on the ground of imperative duty, cannot fail to strengthen those "internal holdings" of moral influences, which are never loosened by those in responsible station without grave detriment to society.

Many other subjects were brought to my notice by individuals interested in the welfare of this population, but which do not properly fall within this inquiry; and various complaints were laid before me, which, on impartial investigation, I found to rest on insufficient grounds, or to be in substance greatly exaggerated, or met by statements diametrically opposed.* The better object of endeavouring to remove misapprehensions, and to promote mutual good understanding and mutual consideration, will, I hope, be more effectually aided by abstaining from any specific mention of them.

(* I regret to say that another strike has lately taken place in this district, with the view of raising wages. It commenced in the middle of May, and terminated about the middle of July, the men having previously reduced their "out-put" to two-thirds of their former quantity, in order the sooner to exhaust the stock of coal on hand. I am informed by one of the largest employers that their average wages for the last two years had been under 2s. 10d. a day ; and, that when the price of iron rose in April, the masters advanced them to 3s. 6d. on the quantity for which they had been paid 2s. 10d. The men demanded a further advance, which the masters could not accede to. The result has been as usual; masters have been compelled to 'blowout' many furnaces, thereby throwing many people permanently out of employ; and the colliers have, in most instances, returned to work on the masters' terms, after two months of privation to themselves and others, and of injury to their employers. Notwithstanding these and the many other injurious consequences of strikes, such is their lamentable infatuation on this subject that they are already meditating another.)

STIRLINGSHIRE

It having been thought desirable, on the termination of my inquiries in Lanarkshire, that I should proceed with as little delay as possible to Staffordshire, I was obliged, in passing through the coal districts of Stirlingshire, Clackmannan, and Fife, to limit my attention chiefly to the manner in which the provision in the Act *by which females were excluded from the mines*, had been observed, and its results. The general statements relating to the principal works in those counties, - namely, to those of the Duke of Hamilton, the Carron and Devon Companies, the Earl of Elgin, Sir Phillip Durham, Captain Wemyss, M.P., and others, - will be found to exhibit the collier population in a point of view in many respects favourable and satisfactory.

The Procurator Fiscal of Falkirk furnished me with a statement, from which it appears that of the eight works in the chief coal district of Stirlingshire, only two, the **Redding** and the **Carron Companies**, laboured under the suspicion of employing females since the Act came into operation. The managers of each of these works gave me various details as to the amount of suffering produced by the Act, which seems to have been considerable ; "falling chiefly on the old, who depended on the aid of daughters, or on the females who had no other resource than under-ground labour. Some of those who felt the privation most severely had unfortunately allowed themselves to be misled by the expectation that the law was to be revised and rendered less stringent; a mistake which had probably relaxed their endeavours to find other employment. On the other hand, parents who had sons only were anxious that the Act should be observed, as creating a further opening for their labour. The amount of the suffering which resulted from the exclusion of the females was

brought to the notice of the heritors at the meeting held at Falkirk in March, 1843. Though far from being yet removed, and therefore still calling for the exertions of the benevolent, it is, I believe, diminished in quantity.

Mr. J. Johnson, manager of the Redding Colliery, stated,-

"We had 126 females employed in the pits when the Act passed. They have been all put out. We have raised the roads, and taken ponies down to draw the coals. Eight of these females we have taken into employ above ground : about a dozen went in to country service, and are still there; others went also, but not liking it have returned. Some are living with their fathers, who with their sons are in full work, and able to support them. Some are getting their living by hawking things about the country. About a score have got married since they ceased to work in the mine. The men cannot earn so much as they did when they had the assistance of the women. The 'output' is less, and we pay in wages £50 less per fortnight. Our men are under no 'regulation;' each puts out as much as he can. Some men will earn by their own labour from 10s. to 15s. a fortnight more than others who are less active or industrious. Many of our colliers (from ten to fifteen at least) are to my knowledge worth from £400 to £600 ; one has saved as much as £800. Many besides (at least 10) have cows. We have above 140 men, and 150 boys. Every one of those who have saved money was brought up as a collier. One-third of our houses are single, the rest are double, or a house and a half. We cannot get them all to keep them as clean as we could wish. In 1832 we went through them all, whitewashed them, and furnished the people with bedsteads, blankets, &c., and cleared everything away about the doors. Since then their habits have greatly improved. Before that, most of them slept on straw ; four or five do so still. They attend pretty well to their children though some neglect them and keep them very dirty. They attend church more regularly now, and are never seen intoxicated on the Sunday, as formerly, and very rarely at any other time. Every man about the works pays ½d. a week to the school. About 150 children attend. The master came from the Bathgate Academy. There is no schoolmistress; but the girls learn to sew in the village. The minister of the established church comes every Sunday to the school and preaches to the colliers; he also visits them in their houses. A methodist chapel has been built within these twelve months by subscriptions of our men. The preacher comes over from Glasgow. There is a lending library, which was set on foot by the men.

The engine begins to draw at six, and stops at five, with an interval of an hour for meals; the boys go down and come up about those hours. Almost all the boys are brought up to be colliers. As they become better educated they will most likely get their children into other employments. All our people are Scotch, and are, on the whole, very quiet and orderly. They marry very early, from 18 to 20 ; and the females always ceased to work below after marriage. The underground works are dry and well ventilated. There have been only four fatal accidents in ten years, and those occurred chiefly from their own negligence. We have no store. The payments are fortnightly, in money. Very few ever require advances. They go to Falkirk for groceries, &c. One of the shops in the village has been here since the works began, between 30 and 40 years ago. We never had an arrestment of wages from it; indeed, we have very few at all.

*The last time our men struck was in 1836-7 ; they have never joined the union since. Lately two delegates came among them, but they would not listen to them. When the price of coal rises we raise wages, without waiting to be asked. Our people are very stationary ; many have been here since the works commenced. No new ones are taken in ; the young ones spring up and supply us; we could rather spare some."**

(*I regret to add that the procurator-fiscal of Falkirk has recently felt it necessary to take steps to bring before the law authorities some cases of contravention of the Act at these works. The pits are accessible by stairs)

The Rev. Mr. Kerr, minister of the parish of Polmont, in which this work is situated, spoke highly of the moral and intellectual state of this collier population, which he considered to be above the average. The less advanced portion of them were living in the worst houses, which were conspicuous for dirt within and without, and for the filthy appearance of the children. This appears to be one of the few remaining objects requiring the judicious care that has been hitherto applied to the improvement of this mining colony. The cases of destitution by the operation of the Act will probably for some time demand commiseration and aid.

Mr. Joseph Dawson, manager of the **Carron Company's Works**, stated -

"We put out the females as soon as the Act passed. We lost nearly a whole month owing to the colliers refusing to work without them. We have heightened the roads, and introduced ponies into the pits. In one pit we made an inclined plane at a great expense. Both ponies and roads are maintained by the Company. The collier is paid at the same rate as before, and no deduction has been made from his price on account of his work, which is now done by ponies, and by other means, equal in many cases to 3d. and 4d. per ton. But the old men cannot now put out the same quantity; the young men do pretty near as much as formerly. After the alterations were made the females stole back again; it was difficult to prevent them, as we have stair-pits leading to all our working-pits, by which the people come and go to their work at all times, as suits them. After the receipt of your circular letter we turned them out again. Our oversmen had strict orders to see to their being out. We had great difficulty even then, but at length we resorted to the plan of stopping the pits whenever a female was found down. This was effectual, as the men who had none, immediately prevented others taking females down. Three were down last Monday, but they were put out; two of them were daughters of an old man who could do little himself. Those who persevere are orphans, widows, or others who have nobody to support them. We gave as many employment above ground as we could; we discharged men in order to take them in. We thought the men could find work more easily elsewhere. Our pays are weekly, at two pay-offices. We have from 300 to 350 colliers in our employ altogether, and about 600 people besides. The week ends on Thursday night. The clerks have till Saturday morning to prepare the books. The colliers seldom receive their money themselves; they send their wives or children for it. Sometimes one man will take what is due to two or three. They meet in Falkirk and Carronshore, and do their marketing. We have no store, nor have our contractors. If a man wants an advance to buy clothes, &c., we let him have it. They have no 'restricted darg.' The union-men sometimes induce them to limit their 'darg,' and make it uniform; they try it for two or three weeks; but young men who can sometimes earn 4s. a day don't like to be restricted to earning 2s., and they break through it, and the rest follow. There is not so much drunkenness as there used to be, owing, I think, to the wages being lower. There are a great deal too many public-houses and spirit sellers. Arrestments for wages give us great annoyance; but we have not been so much troubled with them as we used to be. Some of our men are fairly educated; some the contrary. They are a well-behaved set of men; but there is more idleness than there used to be 20 or 30 years ago; they make more idle days now. We never had a 'strike' such as they have had at other places, as we keep a five or six months' stock of coal on hand. Our people are very stationary on the whole; those who shift are always bare of furniture, and neglect their houses."

Much sympathy was still felt at Falkirk for the numerous sufferers by the Act. Nearly 100 females had been discharged from work below ground in the Carron Works, many of whom were still unemployed. It was estimated that between 20 and 30 families were undergoing considerable privation. In abandoning the idea that the law is likely to be in any way modified, it is to be hoped that those who have been affected by it will be impelled to new exertions to find, by the aid of their more fortunate neighbours, another and a better field of employment.

At the **Bannockburn Colliery** (Messrs. Geddes), 73 females were displaced by the Act. Some few families were reduced to a state of destitution, which was very partially relieved by the parish allowance, the able-bodied not being permitted to share in it. Mr. H. Geddes, however, stated that the change had not been so severely felt in their works, as they had added 3d. a ton to the men's wages to make up to them for the loss of the labour of the women. The cost, therefore, had fallen in this case upon the proprietors. The credit of first directing public opinion against the employment of females in the mines of this country is due to Messrs. Bald and Geddes, mining engineers, Edinburgh, Mr. Geddes being one of the partners of this firm. It may consequently be presumed that a strong desire is here felt to promote in all respects the welfare of the people employed. It is somewhat painful to learn that this disposition has been checked, as in many instances elsewhere, by the variance which the unions and combinations among the men have created between themselves and their masters. Mr. H. Geddes, said "the constant enmity that has been so long kept up between the masters and men has had an effect in preventing as much attention being paid to the moral and economical condition of the people as would otherwise have been the case. The masters have no heart to do it while they are so constantly opposed and thwarted by the men." Nevertheless much has been done by the Messrs. Geddes conducive to the best interests of their work-people.

CLACKMANNANSHIRE.

Mr. Craigh, partner and manager of the **Alloa Colliery**, stated :-

"About 55 females were put out of our pits in March, 1843. Some of them have stolen down since, but they are all banished now. Two or three have got into country service; 10 or 12 into the woollen mills; one or two are married; the rest are maintained by their parents. We gave as many of them as possible work above ground - we threw off men and placed the women in their places. Some were in such misery that we were obliged to divide the week between them to keep them living. None have had any assistance from the parish. Some of the old and infirm parents are getting some assistance from the parish fund. We have no boys underground under the age of ten. We have a good colliery school and an excellent teacher. They are very attentive and careful in educating their children. There has been a good school here for years back. The old Earl of Mar built it, and there has been always a superior teacher. The schoolmaster's house is like a country manse.

We restrict them in their work when our sale is bad; but otherwise they get leave to put out what they choose. It depends upon the strength of the man, and his industry. A good collier will put out nearly twice as much as another. Some of them, who have been attentive and industrious, have saved money. We have some who are pretty rich. They were colliers from their infancy. One has houses both in Clackmannan and Alloa parish. For the last 35 years none but the poorest colliers had their wives down in the bearing pits. They have always had a good church and good minister. The colliers here are church-going people ; there are very few like them. They are better-conditioned people than any I know. We have above a thousand people in all. I have been manager of these works 45 years. They have been a very stationary population. Most of them were all bred upon the place. To put a man away was almost like taking his life from him. They did not like to move. I attribute their good behaviour and good condition to the excellent education they have all had an opportunity of receiving.

Their high wages when coal was high led a great many to drink. They were idle, and drank very much at that time; this was in 1836. They had two strikes in my recollection; one in 1836-7, of a fortnight; another in 1842, of six weeks, for a rise of wages. When we can afford to raise their wages we do so. At present they are very low, hardly 2s. a day for a good collier. In 1836 they were

5s. A good collier and his family often made 9s. a day.

There is a library belonging to them, and it is much used by some of them. Our deepest pits are 70 fathoms; all are stair pits. The ventilation is good, and they are pretty dry. Within my remembrance we have had very few fatal accidents. The colliers and workmen have a fund, which is managed by the accountant of the colliery, to which each man pays 8d. weekly. The fund now amounts to £1000, and from it all the christenings are paid, all the surgeons and school fees, and a weekly allowance to widows, sick persons, and old men who are unable to work."

Mr. Wm. Patton, manager of the **Devon Colliery** : -

"We had 90 females in our employ under ground. We prepared our pits by altering the roads for horses, by the time the act came into operation, at a considerable expense. All the drawing is now done by horses and young men. All the females were put out in March, 1843. None have got down since. We have found employment for those who most needed it, about the pits; others have gone to the woollen factories, and some to service. The whole have got employment now. If any are thrown idle from the mills we give them a few days' work at the pit-heads, displacing others, so as to divide the work between them. At first we employed some of the girls to draw the coal along the railroad above ground to the ironworks, instead of using the horses (about 450 yards), just to give them employment, though it was more expensive to us. After the first few months they all got some occupation or other.

We found, after the females were put out, that the men earned 4d. a day more than when the women were employed. It arose thus:—Two women drew the coal from three men at 1s. 2d. each per day = 2s. 4d. They now find a man at 20d. a day, who draws a greater quantity of coal than the two girls did. The men are now able to put out more coal by having a man to draw. The men have no restriction in their work. The engine goes from six to six in drawing ; with two hours off for meals. A good collier will put out two tubs on an average more than an indifferent one, equal to five cwt , or 3 ½d. a day. Besides this, the young man will work 10 or 11 days a fortnight - the old or indolent man eight or nine. The engine goes 11 days a fortnight; the other day is kept for repairs. We have no store; our pays are fortnightly. With monthly pays the men have too much money in hand, and are apt to squander it in drink. We have a good school; the teacher is paid by the men. There is no mistress; the girls do not learn sewing. The young men attend a night-school. All our men can read ; we have about 90 at these pits. There is a library of historical and religious books, a good deal used, but not so much by the colliers - chiefly by the smiths and mechanics of the iron-works. The parish minister comes and preaches once a month in the Sabbath-school, and visits them in their houses. Many attend the church very regularly. They have been a stationary population. We have no trouble with our people - we find them very manageable. We raise or lower wages according to prices in the market. A strike occurred six years ago, in 1836 - but not very serious. A few have saved money. Some have set up public-houses. A dozen of them have cows; almost all keep pigs and fowls, and all have gardens. They keep their houses in good order ; they have got a taste for it; and have paid part of the cost of ceiling them. Some houses have books in them ; almost all have a large family Bible. On the whole they are a very well- behaved people, quite equal in morals to the agricultural population. They marry younger, and almost entirely among themselves. They associate little with the agricultural people. When the women were employed, they did not work in the pits after the first few months after they were married, and never after they had a family.

Our wages now are not above 2s. 3d. to 2s. 6d. a day.

The teacher of the school endeavours to introduce habits of cleanliness by sending the children home, when they come dirty to school. In habits of personal cleanliness the colliers have yet much to learn. They never wash themselves all over; only their arms, breasts, and legs, to just above their

knees ; seldom their heads, except once a fortnight; not on the intermediate Sunday, though they may go to church. This as much as anything keeps the tidy wives of the agricultural labourers from associating with them or their families."

The general condition of the people of the **Woodlands Colliery**, near **Tillicoultry** (Mr. Bald, proprietor), appeared to be much the same as those last mentioned.

James Sherer, grieve, stated-

"The 12 females in our pits were put out when the Act passed. The men now draw their coal themselves. It makes 1s. to 1s. 6d. a week difference to those who had their own females to help them. The women have all found employment. Mr. Bald sent some to Edinburgh, and got them into some employment there. We have about 80 men in our pits. They are earning 1s. 8d. to 2s. a day only. I never remember earnings lower. When there is a good demand for coal, our active men earn at least 6d. a day more than those who are inclined to be idle, or who are too old to do full work."

Mr. Francis Wilson, oversman of the collieries of the **Clackmannan Company** - (Mr. James Wilson, managing partner) :-

"We had 117 females under ground when the Act came into operation. We immediately excluded them. They made several breaks and got in, but we turned them out as often as we found them. There are none now under ground that I am aware of. We have five pits going - four of them have stairs. The deepest is 34 fathoms, the shallowest 13. The seams are from 5 feet to 3 ½ thick. The drawing is done by men, lads, and horses. The difference in the earnings of the men is not great since women were dismissed. They pay a little more to the lads than they did to the women, - lads 1s. 6d. and 1s. 8d. - women 1s. 2d. But the lads can put out a little more coal. We have 24 women working above ground. We displaced men to take these in; some of those men are, I believe, to this day idle. I have calls every day from men for work. A good number of the women have got employment in the woollen mills at Alloa and Tillicoultry, and thereabouts. Only one is in country service. Several have got married since, and then they work no more, except to tend the family. Some are maintained by their fathers, who are working, and who have sons working with them. I had no applications from them to speak of; indeed only from one man; but I was greatly pressed by the daughters of widows who had no other support, and by one girl who had no father or mother, to let them go down again. There were between 25 and 30 who were entirely dependent on their work in the pit. Most of these we have taken into our own employ on the pit head. As we have about 20 so employed, that will leave not more than 10 who are quite destitute, and must find some means of supporting themselves by their labour. If any of them step down the stair-pits, and work, it is without my knowledge, and contrary to Mr. J. Wilson's strict orders. I myself am frequently down the pits, and the other oversmen have the same charge as myself to prevent the women working. Two months ago I met a woman coming from the pit in her pit dress. I immediately went to the pit head, and condemned all the man's work to whom she was supposed to have worked. The man said he had only got her for the day. He did not deny that she had worked for him. The men have no restriction as to work among themselves. An industrious and active collier can earn and does earn 15s. or so, while an older man or an idle one will not earn 10s. or 11s. A few of them have saved money, and some have very clean and respectable houses, and go to church very respectably dressed. Like colliers in general, they are very deficient in habits of personal cleanliness. Many are very well-behaved moral people, but a great number also are inclined to dissipated habits, and squandering money in drink."

The proprietor of this work, Mr. J. Wilson, being absent, I communicated with him by letter on the 27th of March, on the subject of some alleged breaches of the law which had taken place there. In answer I received from him a promise that every step in his power would be taken to prevent their

recurrence. On the 30th June, a communication from the Procurator Fiscal of Alloa informed me that on the 10th of that month he had found it necessary to institute an inquiry with the view of preferring a complaint against this company before the sheriff, and that the result of that inquiry left no doubt in his mind that females were still employed in their pits. On the 19th July I was made acquainted with the proceedings before the sheriff, which resulted in the acquittal of Mr. J. Wilson, accompanied with a caution from the sheriff against any further violations of the law, and a warning that Mr. Wilson would now be required to adopt other means than he had hitherto used to secure its observance.

FIFESHIRE.

The Procurator Fiscal of Dunfermline had no reason to believe that females were still employed in the mines in any of the eight parishes forming the western district of Fifeshire, in which there were 17 or 18 collieries.

Every thing that long-continued care could devise for the improvement of the collier population has been in progress at the works of the Earl of Elgin, in the Parish of Dunfermline (Mr. Grier, manager), for many years past, and with very encouraging success. The details of management, &c., which are fully given by Mr. Franks in his Report to the Children's Employment Commissioners (Evidence of Mr. Grier, p. 496), need not be here repeated. No females have been employed since that Act passed, and the temporary suffering caused by the change had nearly disappeared. It yet remains to raise the intelligence of these, and the colliers of the other works in the west of Fife, to the point when they will be able to perceive the suicidal consequences of throwing away so large a portion of the best years of their lives, and, while injuring their employers, also inflicting a far greater and more permanent injury on themselves and their families, by their irrational adherence to the "Regulation" restricting each other's labour.

The following evidence of the mining oversman of the **Wellwood Colliery** shows the disposition there is among the most sensible of the men to evade their self-imposed law. He also calls attention to an important and unforeseen consequence, which is very likely to arise from the discontinuance of the labour of females under ground ; - namely, that the men being obliged, in "putting" their own coal, frequently to leave the "wall-face," and pass along the roads where the air is purer, will in all probability be less liable to affections of the breath than they have been.

Wellwood Colliery (Mr. Spowart's, Dunfermline) **Robert Muir**, oversman :-

"We had about 40 females employed when the Act came into operation. Part of these have got employment in the mills or in family service. Some we have taken into employ at the pit head; the most destitute. We give them a week's work, and then take another family. We have eight females who take turn about in this way. We had at first many applications for certificates as to their being destitute, but we have not many now. All have got a living one way or another. We are far better without them. The work below is done with great regularity, and the men earn as much as before; some more. They have a far better chance for their health now, as they come out at the well-ventilated roads instead of always remaining at the wall face. We never saw the women failing in their breath as the men did. We petitioned against the Act, but found it work well, and we would not petition against it now. There are no females in any of the large works in Fife; they all found it far better to be without them. The putting is done by the men, turn and turn about; also assisted by the boys. We have about 80 men and 20 or 30 boys. No boys are under 10. They all go to the school, and all pay. There is no schoolmistress; the girls go to the town to learn sewing.

The coals are paid by net weight. Our men fill just as much as they please. The good men will fill now as much as two tons = 2s. 9d. to 2s. 10d. The indifferent men fill 10 cwt. short, or one ton and a half. They have the stated darg - seven tubs per day ; but the good men evade their regulation by filling heavier. Good and active men would be able to send up more than two tons, if they were not restricted by a law of their own. I think that this regulation is most injurious, by putting the good men and the bad on the same level. This rule has existed here as long as this was a colliery. I have been here six years. When I worked in the Lothians, to Sir J. Hope, for 19 years, there was no stated darg. I have known a man fill four tons in a day there ; I have done it myself. In that colliery I have known, out of 80 men, 20 or 30 making from 20s. to 30s. per week, while the rest would not make more than 10s. or 11s. The stated darg prevails not in the Lothians, but all over Fifeshire. I have often endeavoured to break it up, but have not succeeded. The ventilation is good. We have an upcast and downcast shaft. There are no boys under ground below the age of 10. Three fatal accidents have occurred in six years; all from a fall from the roof.

They wanted lately to throw off two days from the fortnight, in obedience to the union, but we would not give in to it.

There are plenty of ministers who visit them, and we have a sermon every Saturday evening, and Sabbath evening-school. They have prayer meetings. They are a very well-behaved set of men. We have few drinking men. We are improving their houses : they are in general comfortable ; most of them kept them very clean.

Our women get at the pit heads seven or eight days a fortnight at 9d. a day."

Mr. F. Grier, manager of **Fordel Colliery** (Admiral Sir Philip Durham, proprietor), explains in the following evidence the steps taken, at no small cost, to soften as much as possible, both to the females thrown out of employment, and to the men deprived of their assistance, the sudden operation of the Act. The details relating to the injury caused to the proprietor and to the men by the strikes of 1839, are worthy of much attention. It is to be hoped that the efficient means of education provided at these works, and the general care bestowed on the welfare of the people employed, will in due time produce its legitimate effect, in rendering such errors as have so often misled the colliers to their own great disadvantage, for the future impossible.

"We had about 100 females in our pits when the Act came into operation. Many of these have got work in brick fields and out-door labour from the farmers; some have gone to service; one or two are married. Some are maintained by their relations; others earn a little by sewing. At first, after the Act passed, we took five or six widows on our private poor-list, and provided them with meal, &c., till their daughters found employment. We have still some two or three on the list, and not likely to get off; these are widows whose daughters have left the place, and are only just able to support themselves. There are one or two able-bodied girls who partake of this support with their widowed mothers; these will get out-door employment as the spring advances.

The men who had wives or daughters working with them in the pit are not much worse off than they were before. If their daughters are at work they are off their parents' hands. The women earned in the pits from 10d. to 1s. 1d. a day. Now the men draw the coal for themselves. We give them the same as before for hewing, and pay them over and above for the putting. I think that the men are better off in consequence of the change. Being no longer dependent on the women, who often worked irregularly, and our horses, which we have since introduced assisting them, the men can now earn as much as before.

We have about 120 in our employ. They restrict each other as to the amount of their day's work ; it is now seven tubs. The young and the industrious men could put out more, but they say they are not at liberty to do so.

I have often told the men when they have applied to me to raise their wages, that if they would not restrict themselves in their labour they would earn far more than they could get by any rise in wages; but they will persist in keeping all on an equality, old and young. Their unwise proceedings often cause us and themselves great loss, and naturally indispose us to do much for them which we should otherwise be inclined to do. By their strike in 1839 they deprived us of our foreign trade. From 1837 to 39 we got 10s. to 12s. a ton for great coal, free on board, for Russia and Prussia; and for second size coal, 6s. to 7s. 6d. The strike deprived us of that trade, which is now gone to Northumberland and Durham, and has obliged us to reduce the selling price of large coal to 7s. 6d., and second size coal to 4s. and 5s. A reduction has consequently been made in the working price paid to the men, but not nearly equivalent to the reduction of the selling price. Thus the result has been a destruction of so much of the masters' capital, and a reduction of wages.

We have a good school. The boys do not go down under 10 years old. Our attendance is about 300. There are two very good teachers. We have a room for a mistress, but it is not yet used. All the tubs are weighed, and they have net weight. This we have done for the last two years. Sometimes they put on a man of their own to superintend. They work from eight to ten hours. The boys are employed at drawing and hewing. The ventilation is good and the workings dry. Within the seven years that I have been manager, there have been three fatal accidents. All who have children between seven and ten years of age pay 1 ½d. per week per child, and 1d. a fortnight. There is a night school and a library, but not many readers. The minister visits them very frequently in their houses."

To the same effect is the evidence of the manager of the **Donibristle Colliery**.

Wm. Adamson, manager, Donibristle Colliery, (Messrs. Naismith and Grier proprietors) :-

"This colliery has been going 15 years. We have 60 men employed. We had 20 women under ground when the Act passed. We have taken nine to work at the pit head. We put off some women who had another way of living, where persons could provide for them or put them in service. Some of the rest have got into country service. Three are married; so that all are now employed.

We weigh every tub at the pit head. If it comes up light the pin is sent down again, and the man puts in heavier weight in the next to make it up. This has always been our rule, and we never have any dispute with our men, or complaint. The weights may be inspected at any time by them. All the boys are above 10 years old. All pay school wages whether they attend the school or not. We have a good school, built about 10 years ago at the Earl of Murray's expense.

The men put out 6 tubs of 5 cwt., by their own regulation. Mr. Naismith would willingly let them put out more if they would. I think the young men could put out 2 tubs more a day, working 11 days a fortnight. They are paid 4d. a tub, so that a young and active man with a rising family might earn 8d. a day, or 6d. clear, deducting his expenses of oil, &c., more than he does. Shortly after this work commenced there was a brisk demand for coal, and Mr. Naismith gave a premium of 2s. 6d. a fortnight to the men who put out most coal. Some of them, at that time, put out 10 tubs, of 5 cwt. a tub. After about six months they adopted the colliers' regulations, and have since then continued to restrict the darg. Many of them now need to better themselves, having families to bring up, but these regulations of their own wont allow it. Their wages now are about 1s. 3d. a day. The regulation is in force in all the collieries in the west of Fife. I was born in Crossgate, the next

colliery, and I have lived among them all my life. The strike of last year has driven our established trade away to England. The strike lasted three months."

Mr. Bywater, manager of the collieries of Captain Wemyss, M.P., informed me that the whole of the females (30 in number), who were at work in these collieries, had found occupation. The most necessitous had been placed at the pit heads, to pick coal, and were earning as much as they did when working below. Others had obtained work from the farmers. Machinery had been erected in the pits to perform part of the work formerly done by the females; men and boys did the rest, "leaving the collier, as previously, to his own proper work at the wall-face."

Mr. Bywater said :—

"The contracts at these works are for six weeks. Each man signs in a book an acknowledgement of his contract. The result, is beneficial, as it gives time for reflection before they take any step that may be suggested to them. They are very stationary, seldom leaving these Works for others; and, judging from their similarity of names, they are probably the immediate descendants of those who till the end of the last century were adscripti glebae. Relationships are very extensive among them; they have bred " in and in," manifestly to the disadvantage of the existing generation. Our houses for families are all double, and most of them are well kept within and without. The people are greatly improved in habits of decency and cleanliness within the last 25 years. We make the colliers apply their statute labour to the roads, &c., about the collier village. The school fees are compulsory on all who work, with the exception of the men who reside in West Wemyss, where the authority over the school is divided. As regards the rest, we exact school fees towards the support of the teachers, Captain Wemyss providing all books, &c., for the use of the schools. We have well-trained masters, and a sewing school for the girls; also a library and a reading room, which we light gratis."*

(* In almost every colliery village in Scotland I found the same remark made. The medical men in particular, whenever I had an opportunity of making the inquiry, confirmed the observation, that intermarriages in the same families were of constant occurrence, and had long been so from generation to generation. This has been one of the results, perhaps on the whole the most injurious, of the immemorial habit of employing the women in the pits. As no female but a collier's daughter would submit to such a kind of labour, the collier was almost restricted in the choice of his wife to the females of his own village. Hence the frequent intermarriages among relations, and its inevitable consequence, the inferiority, mental or physical, or both, of the descendants; and hence many of those instances of that contraction of mind, and its accompanying obstinacy of prejudice, which leads the collier to oppose himself to the wisest measures of his best friends for his improvement, and to cling to errors destructive of his real welfare.)

I had to regret that the demands upon my time elsewhere, as above mentioned did not permit me to inquire more fully into these and various other points, which afford proof of the attention paid by the proprietors and managers of collieries in Fifeshire to the well-being of the people employed in them.

APPENDIX

The present state of the Iron trade in Scotland (from the Mining Journal of December, 1843)

Works	Situating near	Owners	Furnaces		Estimated weekly Produce	
			In blast	Out		
Govan	Glasgow	W. Dixon	5	..	500	250
Calder	Coatbridge	Ditto	6	2	600	..
Gartsherrie	Ditto	Wm. Baird & Co.	11	5	1200	..
Dundyvan	Ditto	John Wilson	7	2	750	250
Monkland	(Chapel Hall, Calder Bank	Monkland Steel Co.	5	..	500	250
Carnbroe	Coatbridge	Alison & Co.	4	2	500	..
Glengarnock	Beith (Ayrshire)	Ditto	3	..	300	..
Summerlee	Coatbridge	Wilson & Co.	3	3	270	..
Langloan	Ditto	Addie & Co.	3	..	400	..
Clyde	Glasgow	C. Dunlop & Co.	3	3	250	..
Coltness	Wishaw	Coltness Iron Co.	3	1	240	..
Shotts	Ditto	Shotts Iron Co.	2	2	160	..
Castle Hill	Ditto	Ditto	..	2	..	..
Carron	Falkirk	Carron Iron Co.	3	2	200	..
Omoa	Holytown	R. Stewart	1	1	80	..
Muirkirk	In Ayrshire	Muirkirk Iron Co.	2	2	180	100
Devon	Alloa	Devon Iron Co.	1	3	90	..
Blair	Beith (Ayrshire).	Blair Iron Co.	..	3	..	..
Garscube	Glasgow	Galloway & Co.	..	2	..	..
Henschell	Paisley	Henschell Iron Co.	..	2	..	..
Cessnock	Galston (Ayrshire)	Cessnock Iron Co.	..	2	..	..
Wilsontown	Wishaw		..	2	..	..
			62	41	6220	850
		Total . .	13 furnaces			

List of the retail prices of goods in Dundyvan store ; also, a list of the retail prices of goods in three respectable shops in Glasgow. 10th January, 1844.

Dundyvan	Glasgow
Oatmeal, 1s. 6d. per stone.	1s. 6d. & 1s. 8d. per stone
Flour, 2s. per stone	2s. per stone
Barley, 2d. per lb.	1 ½d. 2d. & 2 ½d. per lb
Peas, 2d. per lb.	2d. & 2 ½d. per lb.
Soap, 5d., 6d. & 7d. per lb.	5d., 6d. & 7d. per lb.
Salt butter, 9d. per lb.	9d. 10d. & 11d. per lb
Fresh butter 10d. per lb.	11d. & 1s. per lb
Bacon, 4 ½d. & 5d. per lb.	5d. & 6d. per lb
Beef Ham, 7d. & 8d. per lb.	7d. & 8d. per lb
Candles, 6d. per lb.	6d. per lb
Oil, 1s. 6d. per pint.	1s. 6d. & 1s. 8d. per lb
Eggs, 10d. per dozen.	10d. & 1s. per dozen
Tobacco, 3d. per oz.	3d. per oz
Potatoes, 3 ½d. per stone.	3d. & 3 ½d. per stone

The three shops whose prices are here quoted for provisions, are, Messrs. Finlay, and Leggat, Candleriggs; Mr. Robert Shalloon, Gallowgate; and Mr. John Leggat, Kingate.

Mr. J. Wilson, junr., one of the proprietors of these works, informed me that the article of highest

price at his store, compared with the prices in the common shops, was the oatmeal, and yet that it was the one in greatest demand. It is very liable to adulteration. The price of the best oatmeal at Dalkeith was lately £14. per ton. Oatmeal was at that time to be had in the London market for £12 a ton. A specimen of the latter was mixed with water, and placed to stand for a fortnight, at the end of which time it was in a state of putrefaction. Some of the former, treated in the same manner, was at the end of the same period quite sound.

A specimen of the best wheat flour was analyzed by Professor Faraday, and found to contain the usual quantity of the fusible ash of phosphate, silica, and alkali, about one part in 166; (in 50 grains .-3, or 0.6 of a grain per cent.) Some flour sold at a truck shop near Barnsley was found to contain one-fourth of clay.- See Evidence before Select Committee of the House of Commons, on the Payment of Wages, 1842.

It is obvious that where the purchaser has confidence in the seller, he will prefer giving a high price for a good article, rather than run the risk of getting a bad one at a low price.

List of prices of the leading Articles sold in Store at the Monkland Iron Works, January 1844.

All of the very best quality.

Smoked hams, cut, 7d. per lb.

Smoked hams, whole, 6 ½d. per lb.

Finest bacon, 5d. to 5 ½d. per lb.

Finest cheese, cut, 6d.; whole, 5 ½d. per lb.

Meal 9 ½d. per peck, 15s. 3d. per boll, 30s. per load.

Beef, 5 ½d. to 3 ½d per lb.

Oil, best quality 3s. per gallon.

Steel's Comparison of prices of provisions.

	Prices generally charged by the stores belonging to the Iron & Coal Masters	Prices generally charged at Steel's Provision Stores
Oatmeal per peck	9d.	8d.
Potatoes per peck	9 ½d.	8d.
Barley per peck	1s.	8d. to 10d.
Flour per peck	1s.	8d. to 10d.
Butter per lb.	11d.	6d. to 9d.
Cheese per lb.	7d. to 8d.	4 ½d. to 5 ½d.
Bacon Ham per lb.	6d.	4d. to 4 ½d.
Beef Ham per lb.	8d.	4d. to 7d.
Tea per oz.	5d.	3 ½d.
Tobacco per oz.	3 ½d.	3d.
Salt herring per lb.	2d.	1d.
Brown soap	6 ½d.	5d. to 5 ½d.
Whisky per gill	4d.	3d.
Four lb. fine loaf	7d.	5 ½d.

It is a well-known fact that the working classes, in general, pay too little attention to the savings effected in the purchase of provisions. That such is the case in regard to the colliers and miners of Coatbridge and neighbourhood is without doubt. In most cases workers dealing with the stores belonging to their employers might easily save four shillings per pound in expending that amount. Such a saving in these times of depression and low wages is certainly of the utmost consequence, and would go far to remedy various grievances which the working classes are daily labouring under. A workman with 3s. per day, and at liberty to lay out his earnings to those who supply him cheapest, would then find himself better off than with 3s. 6d. under the present restrictive truck system. In order to open the eyes of the suffering industrious classes of Coatbridge and neighbourhood to this important fact, the above comparison of prices is respectfully submitted for their perusal by -

Andrew Steel, Wholesale and Retail Provision Dealer, Coatbridge.

N.B.— One trial of Steels Provisions will convince all classes of the above facts.

Coatbridge, 20th Jan. 1843.

A. Buttery, Esq., Monkland Iron and Steel Works, Calder Bank, Airdrie.

"We have about 1500 people in our employment. Eighteen months ago we gave up the use of contractors. We had five; there remain two others, one who is an old man, and another whose term will be out in two months. They worked both iron and coal pits, employing about 300 men. The pits which they worked are some of them from three to four miles from our works. We now work these ourselves, appointing a good oversman in each district, who has a man under him in each pit. The shopkeeper charged 5 per cent, upon the goods supplied to the men who were sent to his shop by the contractor, which 5 per cent, was given to the contractor for sending the people there. By abandoning the use of contractors we save the men this 5 per cent., and we get our work done cheaper and much more satisfactorily, as far as iron stone is concerned. The great object of the contractor was to give weight; he accordingly sent in to us a great quantity of rubbish among the iron stone which it was impossible for us to separate. We shall not use contractors henceforward, except perhaps in some outlying district, where it would not pay to keep an oversman for the especial purpose of superintending one pit."

Another employer stated -

"The contractors do the work for us cheaper than the masters can get it done. They take more work out of the men. The men perhaps will do more for them than they will for the master, as the contractor is often one of themselves, or only a little raised above them, and often works with them at first himself; he then gets on, and puts an oversman over them. Some of the contractors are accused of treating their men harshly; often through ignorance. Many of them, instead of keeping a store, deduct 1s, or 1s. 6d. in the pound from the men's wages for making advances to them before the settling day, or lending them their credit with some shopkeeper."

Evidence of J. Lindsey, oversman of Lord Belhaven's Colliery, Wishaw:—

"I have been engaged in the pits at Wishaw 25 years, first as a collier, lately as oversman. There is no restriction of labour in these pits, nor has there been since I have known them. Under our free-labour plan young men can and do, by working steadily 11 days a fortnight, earn (at 2s. 6d. a day, their present wages, which are now low) 5s. a fortnight more than others who are not so strong, or who are inclined to waste themselves by spirit-drinking. A single man can live quite well on 1s. 6d. a day; so that saying that he saves 1s. a day, this, with 5s. a fortnight higher earnings than the old or idle man, will enable him to save 27s. a month. From this must be deducted 3d. a week for sharpening his picks, and 1d. a day for oil, making 9d. a week, or 3s. a month. But say he may save £1 a month instead of 27s. Then at £12 a year, as he begins to make men's wages at 17, he might by

the time he was 24 years old, save even at the present low wages, £84. But wages are now unusually low; so that, what with better wages, and interest of money, it would be as easy as possible for a young collier to save at least £100. by the time he got to be 24 years old.

The free labour here attracts the good men, and we have as regular and well-behaved a set as any in the county. When the price of coal rises our wages rise. It has been done without the men asking; at other times they have asked, and it has been granted.

We have no store. Everything is paid in ready money, every fortnight; but a man may get his money every night if he wants it. The men go down the pits at four, the boys from five to six. The men come up from 12 to 2 generally. One-half of the boys have one day, the 'fore set in the putting, and the other half the 'hind set.' The day that a boy belongs to the fore set, he is set up by 3 or 4 o'clock. We have now 85 colliers employed, old and young; 25 of them are below 17.

Many of the lads attend one of the three evening schools in the village. Our colliers who have been longest with us, and are settled, are as regular for education and attending places of worship as any other class of work-people. Some have many books, and are very intelligent men. There is a library in the village, and another at the parish church. Some of the colliers use these libraries. Every collier has six falls of ground with each house, and they all crop their ground neatly."

At the Coltness Works the men are nominally subject to their " regulation;" but many break through it, and " put out" as much coal as they can.

A store is attached to these works; but Mr. Holdsworth, to encourage competition, made a grant of land close by to a shopkeeper for the purpose of enabling him to build a large shop, at which more business is done than in the store.

The new colliers' houses belonging to these works are remarkable for convenience of internal arrangement. Each consists of two good rooms and a wash-house, with every convenience within it. Water is brought to each in pipes. The rent is 1s. 6d. per week, which returns 7 per cent, on the outlay. The encouragement to cleanly habits given by the possession of houses of so much comfort, had produced, or was gradually producing, its due effect. "Our pays are fortnightly. The men generally work six days a week, and in order not to make an idle day, they go down earlier on the pay Saturday, and come up earlier. The clerks arrange everything, so as to get through the whole pay in a few hours."

At the Duke of Hamilton's Collieries there are no stores. The pays are fortnightly, in cash. Advances are made as seldom as possible; as with the wages earned by the colliers, there is thought to be no excuse in general for their not having money in hand. Advances are found to injure their habits of forethought and independence. The men are paid for net weight; there are, therefore, no tines for short weight.

The average net earnings of the colliers at the Duke of Hamilton's Works was stated to me to be in February of this year, 14s. 2d. to 17s. 2d. per week, after allowing 10d. a week for cost of oil, powder, tools, &c. In addition to this they have house rent-free (worth 50s. a year), and free coal for the labour of " putting it out." Their wages had seldom been lower than at that time. Their habits were to spend them, whether high or low, in eating and drinking. Besides these wages of the collier, his boys, if at work, were able to earn 1s. a day from 10 years old, increasing with their strength, until at 16 or 17 they earned men's wages.

On the same date I was furnished with the average wages of 103 day-labourers in the Duke of Hamilton's employ; namely, 37 foresters, 19 men at day-work in the park, and 47 hedgers. Their average earnings were 1s. 6d. a day. Skilled labourers, masons, were earning at the same time 2s. 6d. a day.

When it is considered that the day-labourer has to pay house-rent, and that he educates his children, dresses decently, and goes to church with his family, as these men were described to me as doing, while the collier applies nearly twice the above earnings to purposes of mere sensuality ; it is plain that his character as a rational being is not likely to be raised by any increase of earnings, unaccompanied by moral agencies brought to bear upon him by those who are interested in his welfare.

Seymour Tremenheere

To The Right Hon. Sir James Graham, Bart., MP

Secretary of State for the Home Department