foreign countries would take from us three times as much as they now do; but *supposing* what has always happened, that by *low duties* you break down and paralize your own national industry, export your specie, involving the country in ruin and bankruptcy, destroying both exports and imports, then what? Instead of $900,000,000, your exports and imports will sink down to less than two and a half the ordinary amount. But Mr. Walker goes further; he says, by adopting absolute and unqualified free-trade, resorting, of course, to *direct taxation* for revenue—levying the taxes on the *American people* instead of *foreign goods*—Mr. Walker says we would "measure our annual trade in imports and exports by *thousands of millions!* Who can but smile at such insanity run mad. Mr. Walker might measure his imports by "thousands of millions" if he had money to pay for them, but when he tells us that the whole of the specie in the United States does not exceed ninety millions of dollars, not enough to pay for one months' imports under his "free-trade" system, how long would it last? His "free trade" engine would blow out before it got fairly under way. Our imports may depend upon ourselves, but our exports depend upon the disposition of foreign countries to purchase; and they will not purchase from us when they can supply themselves. If Mr. Walker can devise a plan to create a famine or the potato rot in Europe, he may, to some extent, carry out his theory, but not otherwise. We can purchase as much as we please while we have money or credit; but like the reckless spendthrift, when these are gone, we must quit, and go to work, or starve. There is but one way in which Mr. Walker's plan of making our exports amount, under "free trade," to "thousands of millions," and that is the plan, no doubt, he has in view. That is, to export our ore and coal to England, and bring it back in bar iron, axes, hoes, shovels, needles, and anchors. Export our wheat and corn, and bring it back in flour; or what is worse for us, and better for them, worked up in gaisly manufactures. Send them our hogs, and bring them back in Bologna sausages. Send them our raw hides, and bring them back in leather, shoes, gloves, &c. Send them our wool at 50 cents per pound, and buy it again at ten times that amount, in cloth—paying, not only for the wool, but for the foreign labor, and the profits of foreign capital employed in its manufacture. Send ten dollars worth of raw material and buy it back with the addition of one hundred dollars paid to foreign labor for working it into goods, while our own labor is left without money and without employment. I see it stated that one dollars worth of iron, made into mainsprings of watches, is worth $20,000; and this is all labor and its substance.

Such is Mr. Walker's theory of "free-trade" carried out to its practical results—this, he says, would give employment to all our ships. Yes, sir, and with the same propriety he might advise a western Pennsylvania farmer to load his wagon with wheat, and take it to Kentucky to be ground, and bring back his flour to keep his team employed—what would the farmer say to Mr. Walker's proposition?

But, sir, I wish to present another, and a more important view, in connexion with this subject of "free trade," which Mr. Walker regards as the greatest blessing that could be bestowed upon the people of this country, and especially upon the laboring people—"the toiling millions" as he calls them, in whose prosperity and welfare he seems to take such especial interest; he speaks of increasing their "comfort, education, and intelligence," of "enhancing wages of mechanics and toiling workmen," blessing them with increased prosperity."

Now, I undertake to say, and to demonstrate, that just the reverse of all this would be its consequences; and I submit the matter to the enlightened judgement and decision of the American people. I say that, instead of inhancing wages and increasing the "prosperity, comfort, education and intelligence" of "the toiling millions," it would degrade them, in every department of industry, to the miserable condition of the pauper and serf-labor of Europe, subsisting themselves and families on a shilling a day.

Break down the walls of protection, repeal the tariff, open your ports, establish free trade, and let in the products of foreign 12½ cents a day labor, and American labor must quit work and give up their markets till our money is all gone; then our mechanics and workingmen must come down, and work as cheap as they do. Is not this inevitable? and these are the blessings Mr. Walker has in reserve for the dear people, "the voters," "the toiling millions." Mr. Walker says in his Report, that "freight," with steam and modern improvements, amounts to little or nothing; that *duties* are the only thing that prevents foreigners from taking free and full possession of our markets, and in this he is right for once; they will take possession of our markets till American labor, mechanics, and all, come down and work for a shilling a day. Is this not perfectly clear? Can it be doubted or denied? For illustration: suppose in Baltimore manufacturers and mechanics hire workmen at 25 cents a day, and here in Washington they pay a dollar, will not the Baltimoreans send down their goods, hats, shoes, clothes, everything, undersell the hatters and others here, and must they not either give up business, or bring their labor down to the Baltimore standard. They may buy as long as they have money, but when their money is all gone, they must work cheap or starve. The only difference between Europe and Baltimore is the "freight," which Mr. Walker says is now but a slight impediment to imports. Such would be the ultimate effects of "free trade" on American labor.

The great object and office of a tariff is to protect high and prosperous labor against the ruinous effects of free competition with low-priced and depressed labor. Low labor wants no protection against high labor, but high must be protected against the low, or by free competition, be brought down to its level. This result follows just as certainly as the removal of a wall which separated two unequal bodies of water, would bring the two down to the level of the other. Proclaim "free trade," open your ports to the productions of the pauper and serf-labor of Europe, working for ten cents a day, and what follows? in pours their goods, and out pours your money; goods come in and money goes out till it is all gone; then we must make our own hats, shoes, and clothing, or go without. And this is the way in which Mr. Walker, his "model President," and the advocates of "free trade," would "increase the wages, and promote the "comfort, education, and intelligence" of the American people—by degrading them to the condition, *moral* and *physical*, and, in the end, the *political* condition, too, of the paupers and slaves of foreign despots. How could American freemen live on a shilling a day? How could they educate their children, who would be obliged to work from the cradle to the grave? unfitted to be free, they would become subjects and slaves. Depress one class, and you of course elevate another—put down the many and you build up the few—first you establish a nobility, and next a king. I submit, would not such be the tendency, if not the end, of "free trade," carried out to its final results? Yet this is "*democracy*," the modern "progressive democracy," as preached and practiced by Polk and his party.

But this is not all. The duties levied on foreigners to protect our laboring men, furnish nearly the whole revenue for the support of Government. But establish "free trade," and you not only release the foreigner and his goods from all taxation, but you transfer the burdens to you own impoverished people—you appoint swarms of tax-gatherers to harrass and plunder them—to sell their last cow, and take the last bite of bread from their children, to support your wars, your standing armies, tax-gatherers, lords, princes, and pensioners. The revenue collected from protective duties heretofore levied on foreign goods was felt, not as a burden, but as a blessing and benefit in the protection and prosperity they gave to the national industry; but repeal these duties, paid by foreigners for the privilege of selling their goods in our markets, open your ports, crush your labor, inundate your country with foreign productions, and then resort for revenue to *direct taxation*, and you convert a blessing into a bitter curse. But thank God the remedy is in the hands of the people! I leave Mr. Walker and free trade with "the voters," the "toiling millions," to settle the matter in their own way.

Mr. Walker says, "it will soon become an axiomatic truth, that all tariffs are a tax upon labor and wages"—on *American* labor—a small mistake; if he had said a tax upon *foreign* labor for the protection and encouragement of *American* labor, he would have been right. This is a small blunder. He will no doubt revise and correct it in his next essay on the beauties of "free trade."

But Mr. Walker boasts that his report of 1845, published in England by order of Parliament, "accelerated, if it did not produce the repeal of the corn laws." This is another blunder. The corn laws were only suspended till Mr. Walker repealed the odious anti-British tariff of 1842. That accomplished, and the famine over, the corn laws go into operation again on the 1st of March, sliding scale and all. But Mr. Walker says he has not only converted great Britain, but he has staggered all Europe. Hear him! Hear him! "France, Russia, Germany, Austria, Italy, Prussia, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweeden, and even China have moved, or are *vibrating* or *preparing* to move in favor of the same great principle; another blunder, these nations, or most of them, so far from relaxing, are increasing or strengthening their protective systems, wherever their markets are likely to be invaded by foreign manufactures coming in competition with their own. But who told Mr. Walker they were "vibrating" or preparing to move? They may *vibrate* a little to amuse Mr. Walker, and induce him to take our duties off their goods, and he has done it. And what have they done? Nothing—nothing at all. They are "vibrating," but their tariff vibrations all go up, instead of down, while they laugh at Mr. Walker's simplicity.

LABOR, ITS IMPORTANCE AND VALUE.

But, above all, I beg you to protect and cherish your national industry; to protect and sustain it against the efforts of its enemies, *foreign* and *domestic*, to break it down. Labor lies at the very foundation of the national prosperity. Labor, in every department—in the fields, in the workshops, in the factories—cherish it and preserve it as the great element of your national wealth and independence. When labor prospers, all other interests prosper—when labor is depressed, all other interests must suffer and sympathize with it.

What is all other capital compared with the capital of labor. Estimate your labor at one-tenth of your population, say two millions of laboring men; if they earn but $180 per year, this is equal to the interest of a capital of $3,000 per annum at 6 per cent. which, multiplied by two millions, the number of laborers, makes our *labor capital* equal to *six thousand millions of dollars*; and this is the great element of power and wealth and prosperity that Mr. Walker would sacrifice and degrade to the wretched condition of European labor, by his miserable policy of "free trade"—compelling the Americans to work as cheap as they do in Europe, or give up their markets and their money to foreigners.

As, then, you value the virtue, liberty, and independence of your country, I beseech you protect and defend your labor from the ruinous effects of foreign competition. I call upon the laboring men—the voters of the land—to come to the rescue, to protect themselves; the power is in their own hands, let them exert it for their own security and defence. I know what it is to labor—I come from the ranks of the laboring men—I feel for their interests, and I sympathize in their sufferings; and when I desert them, may Heaven desert me.

THE INCONSISTENCY AND DESTRUCTIVE POLICY OF POLK AND HIS PARTY.

Mr. Walker next speaks of his great horror of paper money. "The calamities which must follow an inflated paper currency." Nothing is more injurious, he says, "than the expansions, contractions, and fluctuations of the paper system." This "perilous and seductive system," says Mr. Walker, leads to the excessive importation of foreign goods, (the very thing he has been advocating,) and drains our country of its specie, producing immense sacrifices, and "depressing the industry of the whole country;" and this eloquent denunciation of paper money and its ruinous effects is made at the very moment that he is issuing millions and tens of millions of paper money in the form of Treasury notes, and is now calling on us to authorize the issue of some eighteen or twenty millions more of this miserable "paper money," which, he says, is so disastrous to every national interest. How does Mr. Walker reconcile this glaring inconsistency? What are Treasury notes but paper money? Worse than bank paper, because less valuable in the money markets of the country. Mr. Walker boasts that last year he received and paid out forty-eight millions of dollars, *all in specie*. Now, sir, let him issue fifteen or twenty millions of addiional Treasury notes, and next year he will not receive and pay out one million in specie; sir, it will expel specie from the country; this depreciated paper money, Treasury notes, will fill up the channel of circulation at home, and specie will go and is going abroad to pay for foreign goods.

With nothing but depreciated Treasury notes, *continental money*, how is Mr. Walker to get on with his specie-paying sub-treasury? He is bound by law to pay in specie, and has scarcely a dollar of specie in his vault. He will be obliged, by his own mad measures, to come here very soon and beg Congress to relieve him from the ruinous effects of his own favorite policy, by repealing the sub-treasury and the tariff of 1846. Treasury notes are now one or two per cent. under par, and declining. Mr. Walker will of course, receive nothing else for revenue. Who will now pay him one dollar in specie? As long as Treasury notes were above par, the Treasury of course received nothing but specie; but when Treasury notes go down below par, then every man pays in Treasury notes, because they are worth less than specie, and the Treasury is bound to receive them at par; the Treasury, therefore, will not have a dollar of specie in its vaults, and of course, its paper, like any other non-specie-paying bank, must depreciate.

What gives value to paper money? *Convertibility*—convertibility into specie on demand. What is your sub-treasury but an overgrown government bank, issuing millions and tens of millions of paper money, without a dollar to redeem it? A non-specie-paying bank, with its paper depreciated, perhaps 15 or 20 per cent. If the issue of Treasury notes should greatly exceed the amount absorbed in payment of the revenue, as they will, if you increase their issue to the extent proposed, they must not only sink, as they have done, but they will go down greatly below par. How are you then to pay your creditors? Must they take your depreciated rags, when, by your sub-treasury you promised them specie? But they have no alternative, that or nothing. Is it honest, is it right to force your brave, poor soldiers, your honest creditors, your clerks, and hirelings, to take this depreciated rag currency? Is it right to force the poor soldier's wife to go to the hard-hearted broker to shave her pittance at the rate of 15 or 20 per cent to enable her to buy bread for her starving children? To force your contractors to do the same thing, to meet their liabilities for provisions to feed your troops in Mexico? They must take your depreciated paper at par, or nothing. They must submit to the loss, and be ruined.

Sir, I can go for no such injustice: no such villianous policy as this. I will give the Government the right to borrow and pay in good money, but not to pay it in its own depreciated and irredeemable paper. I agree, sir, with Mr. Walker, in much that he says about the disastrous effects of the excessive issues of paper money—its ruinous effects upon the national industry, its tendency to induce excessive imports of foreign goods, and the exportation of specie, which will alone be received in payment abroad, leaving this worthless paper money to fill up the channels of circulation at home. I agree with Mr. Walker in this, and I hold him to it. I call on him, in this case, to practice what he preaches.

But, this Administration goes by the rule of contrary; their theories and their measures are always at war. When they preach economy, I look out for extravagance; when they flatter the people as the true sovereigns of the land, then comes a veto; when they cry peace, then look out for war; when they say democracy, look out for aristocracy; when they denounce paper money, look out for Treasury notes; when they say 54 or 40 or *fight*, look out for "*slink out*" and 49; whenthey say *no conquest*, look out for *all of Mexico*.

This policy of the administration has been more disastrous to the best interests of the country, more dangerous to its harmony and its integrity, than that of any other that has existed since the foundation of the Government. Three years ago, when this Administration came into power, it found the country peaceful and prosperous in all its interests; and what is its condition now? The country has been governed *by party* and *for party*. Unable to reward their numerous and hungry partizans, this Administration has involved the country in war, which enables it to satisfy the ravenous appetite of thousands of its war shippers with high offices and fat contracts. Peace will loosen their grasp on the peoples treasury. Nothing but a failure of revenue—a want of money—an empty Treasury, will give us peace, and this powerful negotiator is near at hand.

But let us look back for a moment, what a contrast is presented between the Whig and Locofoco policy. When Mr. Van Buren came into power he found a surplus of about 40 millions in the Treasury; when he went out, he left it about 40 millions in debt; and the revenues 10 or 12 mill ions short of the expenditures, and ruin and bankruptcy national and individual prevailing throughout the land. In this state of things, the Whigs came into power in 1841; they passed the tariff of 1842, and the prosperity of the country was restored, and the Treasury replenished as if by magic. In the four years of its operation it paid off nearly $40,000,000 of the principal and interest of the public debt, and in a year or two more, after the entire extinguishment of the debt, it would have left a surplus of 20 millions a year for the improvement of our great rivers and harbors, affording security to life and property, and giving prosperity and increased extent to our vast internal commerce.

But this bright and cheering prospect was suddenly overcast by the overthrow of the Whigs, and the accession of the present Administration, in 1845. See to what they have already brought the country! From a character and a credit so high as to command untold millions at a premium, they have brought it down so low, that they are now unable, we are told, to effect a loan of some ten or twelve millions on any terms. Look what the Baltimore Convention have done; that convention prescribed and dictated the policy of this Administration in advance—this was done by an irresponsible caucus of artful and ultra politicians, with Mr. Walker at their head. He, Mr. Walker, made Polk and Dallas what they are! he built up this Administration; he now dictates its policy, and governs its action. Yes, sir, that caucus extorted a pledge from their chief, and made him promise, in his inaugural, to carry out their dictation. The first thing was the annexation of Texas, resulting in war. Next, to arrest internal improvement, then adopt the Sub-treasury, and finally, repeal the tariff of 1842; what has followed? Down goes revenue and up goes the national debt at the rate of twenty or thirty millions a year; thousands of lives, and millions of money wasted in a foreign land, and who knows for what? Who can tell for what this war is now prosecuted, or how or when it is to end? One thing, however, is very certain, that it must demoralize our people, involve our country in an enormous debt, resulting in ruinous and oppressive taxation, and may end in the dissolution and overthrow of our glorious Union itself; an event, the contemplation of which must fill with horror and despair the hearts of the friends of freedom throughout the world—a catastrophe which, may God, in his infinite mercy, avert from our beloved country.

[For the Miners' Journal.]

New-York, 22d Feb., 1848.

Mr. Benj. Bannan.

Dear Sir:—In your paper of the 19th inst. I find a gross and libellous attack upon the Forest Improvement Company.

As I have from the commencement of the existance of this Company been one of the Managers, and for the most of the time the active Manager in Schuylkill County, I may be supposed to know quite as much of the management of the Forest Improvement Company as the "Coal Dealer" (!) who figures in your columns.

The Correspondence and Negotiations with the Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad Company have been conducted by me, and it would be supposed that I should (on reading your paper) have some faint recollection of what passed between us, but really the facts are so much perverted by your Correspondent that I did not recognise my own negotiations although your Correspondent *seemed* to quote from my letters.

This is not the first time the Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad Company have attempted to divert public attention from themselves, by endeavoring to raise a dust about the Forest Improvement Company. Two years ago *they* flooded Schuylkill County with Memorials to the Legislature—asking them to appoint a Committee to enquire into the management of the Forest Improvement Company, alledging, as now, that the Company was violating its charter. To meet that Memorial I sent to the Chairman of the Committee having it in charge, a copy of our charter, and urged the appointment of the Committee asked for in the aforesaid Memorial.—*Then as now*, the Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad Company had an application pending before the Legislature, and if this effusion of "A Coal Dealer" (!) operates as effectually at Harrisburg as did the aforesaid Memorial, you may be assured the application for a rival Railroad, will pass triumphantly. But I did not take up my pen to attack the Mine Hill Railroad Company, much as they deserve it from me. They have pursued a system calculated, as they supposed, for their own interest, and if they have made mistakes they must submit to the result.

I address you, in order publicly at once to deny the truth of the allegations in your paper, in relation to the negotiations with the Mine Hill Railroad Company, and so far as I can, with the present means at my command, place said negotiation before the public in its simplicity and truth.—Fortunately your Correspondent has enabled me to do so, by giving in his article or date (Jan. 1843) for by recurring to a file of my letters, written to a friend in New York in 1843, I have placed my hand on copies of two letters addressed by me to Mr. Jas. Dundass, dated January 1843, of which I hand you copies herewith.

The letter of the 4th January, 1843, shows conclusively that it was the commencement of a Correspondence. That which I had previously with the same party was commenced, and I believe, concluded before I went to Schuylkill County to reside. It is proper, however, for me to say that in the interval I had a number of interviews with Mr. Dundass, on the subject of a *general reduction of Tolls*, as did others operating upon the West Branch—to all of which a deaf ear was turned.

At an interview with Mr. Dundass, and previous to the date of my first letter, (herewith) and in view of an application to the Legislature, for a general reduction of Tolls, said to have been made by Doct. Fitch, Mr. Dundass gave me *distinctly* to understand that the Managers of the Mine Hill Railroad wou'd resist any such enactment. Under these circumstances I was obliged to abandon, and did abandon the question of a general reduction of Tolls. Then commenced a discussion which resulted in a request from him that I would address him in writing, and my letter of the 4th January, 1843, is the result of that interview. In reply to my letter of the 4th, Mr. Dundass wrote me under date of the 7th, a copy of which I do not find on file here; but I do find in one of my letters an extract from it. In order to frustrate the charge of partial quotation, I give you a copy of that part of my letter relating to the subject in connection with the extract.

My second letter to Mr. Dundass, was under date of the 9th January, 1843, a copy of which you have also herewith.

I very much regret that it seems necessary for me to reply without having the whole Correspondence before me; but I am in New York, attending the sick bed of a near friend, and it is impossible for me to be at home for some days. There must have been some farther Correspondence, but I cannot lay my hand upon it *here*. Your Correspondent the "Coal Dealer," (!) may however, have the whole of it published, if he desires it—and at my earliest opportunity. I think, however, that this Communication with the accompanying copies of letters, is quite sufficient to show your readers that whatever might be the advantages or reductions sought for by the Forest Improvement Company, it was not intended for their own benefit directly, but for the benefit of their Tenants and others engaged in the White Ash Trade.

I think, sir, I have a right to expect you to give a place in your next paper, to this communication and the accompanying papers.

Respectfully, Yours,

CHAS. DE FOREST.

Appendix No. 1.

Copy.

Schuylkill Haven, Jan. 4, 1843.

James Dundass, Esq.

Dear Sir: Some three years since I made an application to the Directors of the Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad, which did not at the time meet with much favor, and so far as the Board was concerned, was treated rather cavalierly.

At the same time I acknowledged that your own letter to me was frank and courteous. At that time I approached you as a stranger, and as you perhaps had a right to suppose, a stranger to the Coal Trade and the Mining interest.

I may now address you with the belief that you will hear what I have to say as coming from one having some practical knowledge of the Coal trade, and that *not limited* to the particular section in which our lands happen to be.

Your toll list will show to what extent I am interested, and bear me out in the expectation that my present application will receive more attention than the one to which I have referred.

In the first place I remark that the prosperity of the "Forest Improvement Company," the "Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad," the "Schuylkill Canal," and the "Reading Railroad" depends now, (and will more emphatically hereafter depend) upon the fact that Anthracite Coal from Schuylkill County, can be delivered in the several consuming markets at a less price than from the other producing regions. I say will *more* depend *hereafter*, from the fact with which I am personally cognizant that the prejudice against the White and in favor of the Red Ash for family use, is fast giving way, and the Red Ash will not as formerly, command two or three Dollars or even One Dollar per ton more than White Ash, and the time is at hand when probably little or no difference will exist. Add to this the fact that the great increase of consumption is not in families, but in Steamboats and Manufactories; which use exclusively White Ash.

The Reading Railroad has done much towards meeting this change in the consumption, and it is likely that in the natural course of events, the Railroad and Canal will keep that part of the line of transportation as low as it can be afforded, but unless the reduction between this and Philadelphia is aided by deductions at all points, where practicable, the Lehigh and Lackawana Regions will take the lead. It is plain, I think, that unless the production of this Region is *materially increased*, there is not enough to give support to both Railroad and Canal, *except at high prices*, and it may fairly be expected that their competition will result in a war of extermination, in which one or both will fall, and although the Canal and Railroad will still exist, the Trade will continue for years in a state so disturbed as to destroy its steadiness, and consequently its efficacy.

Under the full conviction that the Coal Trade was fast approximating to this point, our Company started with a determination to do its part in meeting the other producing Regions in the several markets; first by offering our Lands at a low Rent, but adding thereto outlays and facilities, which your Toll list will show you, has not been without the proper results.

The developments of the past Season in the Coal Trade, and of the course pursued and intended to be pursued by the Lackawana, has satisfied me that the crisis is nearer at hand than I had anticipated. Quite a number of Steamboats have the last year consumed Coal exclusively, and most, if not all, will do so the coming season.—The *increased* consumption the last year by Steamboats alone, cannot be less than 50,000 tons, none of which (with the single exception of 50 tons,) was from the Schuylkill Region. It is for those reasons that I am induced at this time to come to you with my proposal. Our this year's delivery has been about 40,000 tons and I ask from you a reduction of 10 cents per Ton, on what we may send over your Road beyond that quantity. We propose the same advantages to our Tenants, by offering a reduction in Rent for all Coal delivered beyond the minimum, which is simply a premium upon the *extension* of delivery,—a point as desirable to you as to us.

I make the proposal in this shape in order to postpone discussing the question of a reduction of tolls on the general business of the Road, which may be avoided for some time by this concession to our Company. It is in the White Ash Region that our lands are situated, and to which our remarks particularly apply. The Red Ash Veins may or may not be able to bear your tolls, as the expenses from the West Branch may happen to compare with the expenses from Pottsville and Port Carbon." * * * *

(The sentence here omitted is in relation to another chartered Company, and is not pertinent to the question at present at issue, as your correspondent, the "Coal Dealer" [!] can confirm.)

If your Board entertain my proposition, it is very desirable to me that it should be early attended to, for the reason that any material extension of sales must be looked for only by anticipation of sales to the *present customers* of other Regions, and I propose to leave home about the 10th or 12th for that purpose, and it is not only desirable but necessary that I be prepared to name the lowest possible price.

With respect, &c.

(Signed.) CHAS. DE FOREST.

Appendix No. 2.

Copy of C. De Forest's letter of 10th January, 1843, to a friend in New York:

"I have received an answer from Mr. Dundas. About two pages is taken up in saying how much they had done for the Coal Region and for our lands, and how illy they have heretofore been remunerated, and how unfair it would be to attock them, when they are doing so much, intimating that although the Legislature should reduce the tolls, they would pay no attention to it until their right to do so should be settled by the Supreme Court. His last sentence is in better taste; he says:

"'Your suggestion that the Company should make an allowance or reduction upon the excess over some fixed amount of magnitude, say 40,000 tons, is somewhat different from a proposition for a general reduction of tolls, and I have no doubt will be considered maturely by our board, and in a proper spirit.

I am respectfully yours,

(Signed) J. DUNDAS.

To which I have replied as follows:

Schuylkill Haven, 9th Jan. 1843

J. Dundas, Esq.

"Sir—I have received your letter of 7th inst. in reply to mine of the 4th. I beg leave to repeat that, in my opinion, the Forest Improvement Co and Mine Hill Railroad will flourish or languish together, and in making my proposition it was in the belief that the good judgment of your board would agree with me that it would be for the interest of the Railroad to accede to it. I had not then, nor have I now, any doubt of the success of my application. I suppose the discussion upon my proposition at your board, will be this: Will this concession to the Forest Improvement Co. increase or decrease permanently the income of our road? and not whether your tolls are higher or lower than your neighbors, and not whether you have or have not heretofore received proper returns for your expenditure. If it be a fact that you have not received adequate returns for the capital invested, it seems to me doubly desirable that at least the question should be mooted: How can we make it more productive? At any rate I disclaim for myself, (as I did in my last) any wish or intention to canvass the subject of a general reduction of tolls. This I would prefer should be left to Dr. Fitch and his associates, if he has any. At the same time, I am free to say that I have no doubt but that question will, soon or later, force itself upon your consideration, and when it comes it will afford me much pleasure to be placed in a neutral position.

One might suppose, from the argument in your letter, and particularly in the third sentence from the end, that you had supposed I had buried myself. If upon that question—but your officers here *can* inform you that the application to the Legislature, last year, had my most hearty disapproval, and that probably this fact prevented some from joining Dr. Fitch who might otherwise be disposed to do so. With this disavowal, I trust your Board will entertain my proposition, divested of any supposed connection with the question of a general reduction of tolls, and that it may be discussed and determined upon its own merits. I have thought much upon the best means of increasing the Coal deliveries, and have arrived at the conclusion that a premium upon the excess over a minimum will prove the most effectual. We have from the beginning named low rents, but in addition to this we have now come to the conclusion that a premium upon extended deliveries, is for our interest, and all we ask of your Company that you will for your own good extend to us the same kind of encouragement that we proffer to our tenants.

With assurances of respect, &c

(Signed.) CHAS. DE FOREST.

[For the Miners' Journal]

Mr. Bannan:

An article appeared in your paper of the 19th instant, which, as it contained many errors and misstatements, we regretted observing was to a certain extent endorsed by yourself.

The writer of the article appears to have labored under a wrong impression as to the causes which have led the Coal Operators on the line of the Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad to apply to the Legislature for an act authorising the construction of a new Railroad from Schuylkill Haven to the Broad Mountain.

The so-called "hostility to the West Branch Railroad" had not its origin in the refusal of that Company to grant "partial privileges" (as it is alleged) to a certain "Coal Mining Company in disguise." In fact, the applicants for a new Railroad disclaim being actuated by feelings of hostility towards the Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad Company. We are willing that Company should enjoy all the privileges intended to be granted by its charter: but are not willing those privileges should be *exclusive*. Our reasonable request is, that the large expenditures we have made upon the line of the Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad should not be arbitrarily controlled, nor be further taxed, for the purpose of constructing roads to the other Coal Fields, as we say they have heretofore been, by the constant aggregation of the capital of that Company, ostensibly for such purposes. We object to the doctrine that the Mine Hill Railroad Company has a *prescriptive* right to transport all the Coal which is now mined and that may hereafter be mined, not only on the West Branch of the Schuylkill and its tributaries, but also in the Swatara district which, (as is stated in a memorial of that Company to the Legislature in 1846) contains "an area of 108 square miles or 69,120 acres of Coal lands." We do not wish to be identified with *any* "Coal Company," as we have no connection with any, and care not how soon the County is rid of all. As individuals we have applied to the Legislature for power to construct a Railroad, in order to increase transporting facilities for a large and fast growing trade. And to render ourselves less subservient to a corporation, whose exactions have already been so long submitted to, that our attempts to check their further increase, seem to be viewed, as rank rebellion against its *legitimate and vested rights*.

Upon the files of the present House of Representatives at Harrisburg, is a bill number 235, passed quietly through the appropriate Committee, because no one interested in opposing it, knew that so monstrous an attempt to increase its profits and powers, was about to be made by the Mine Hill Company. This bill authorizes an addition of $750,000, to its present capital, and is only a still bolder exhibition than has before been given of the inordinate cupidity, so characteristic of its management. It is so such grasping attempts at advantages, (the odium of which, the shrewdness of the managers of this institution has hitherto enabled them to cast upon others) that the so called "hostility" of the operators is to be attributed, and which dates back to 1832, a period seven years previous to the corporate birth of the Forest Improvement Company.

In the history of the Mine Hill Railroad Company itself, is to be read the causes of the dissatisfaction felt by the contributors to its prosperity, and a reference to the pages of that history "will place the subject" in its true light before the public and the Legislature."

The Mine Hill Railroad Company, was chartered in 1828, at the instance and application of parties interested, in opening the important coal field now traversed by its numerous branches; and a large portion of its original stock was subscribed for by residents of Schuylkill County. The object of the enterprise was avowedly, not to derive a direct profit from tolls, but to open the lands of its projectors to market. In this view, the rate of charges adopted, was for *that* period a low one, being 1½ cents per ton, per mile. The capital was limited to $100,000, with the provision that when the *Tolls* "should" "exceed 15 per cent on the capital expended, they should" "be reduced so as not to exceed that amount." Thus it is seen, that the pioneers of the undertaking, had none of those magnificent, and tempting schemes of wealth to be derived from their Railroad, which it now seems the integrity of its present stockholders, is unable to withstand, but were satisfied with the prospect of moderate profits on their investment, and the collateral benefit of opening their lands to market.

It is unnecessary at this time to enter into a detail of the contrivances, which produced a speedy depreciation of its stock, and its equally speedy absorption by certain *absentees*; it is sufficient to say that Stock Brokers and speculators might take a lesson by them; and that when the encroachments of this Company upon the rights of community began, but little, if any, of its stock remained in the hands of residents of this County.

The Supplements of 1829, 1830, and 1831 were obtained without resistance or objection; but in 1832, (the *actual* era of the commencement of that contest for private rights against the prescriptive privileges claimed by the Mine Hill Company) another supplement, injurious to the interests of many individuals, was applied for, and obtained, in the face of earnest and continued remonstrances. From that time, to the present, the contest, though occasionally remitted, has been renewed, with each of the numerous attempts of the Company to extend its privileges at the expense of the operators. These contests like most others between incorporated Companies and individuals, have heretofore resulted in the success of the former; until by the addition of supplement upon supplement, the repeal of one clause, and enactment of another; the *original* charter, has been the *germ of a great wrong*; and the Company instead of being satisfied with 15 per cent *Toll* on $100,000, *now claim that per cent of nett profit* on $600,000, and the right to construct, a so called "*Depreciation fund*," limited to no definite amount in the aggregate, and its *annual* accumulations, subject to no control, either Legislative or legal. This "depreciation fund" has already from the surplus *profit* of a single year been swelled by an amount exceeding $14,000 exacted, as we say, *unjustly* from the operators.

Passing over the various supplements by which the capitol had been swollen to $400 000 in 1846, we reach the act of that year. In a memorial of the Mine Hill Railroad Company to the Legislature, [consequent upon objections, urged by operators against a grant of further powers to this already dangerous institution;] great surprise is expressed, that there should "*exist an opposition to the passage of the bill*" granting the Company the right to issue $300,000 additional stock, the *ostensible* object of the application, being to extend the Railroad of the said Company to the "head waters of the Swatara." The memorial states "that the limits prescribed by the charter, to the capital stock have been already attained by the *recent* subscriptions of the stockholders, and which will *not more than suffice* to meet the cost of grading on that route." It thus appears that the Company not restricting itself to 15 per cent dividend exacted from its customers, on the amount of capital *actually expended* which is the limit beyond which the *charter, says it shall not go—did infact*, declare such dividends, upon a sum *then unexpended*, sufficient to grade 7 miles of new road.

It would extend the limits of this article too far, to examine in detail, *all* the various acts of extortion and wrong perpetrated by the Mine Hill Company! Sufficient has been recited, to prove the utter falsity of the assertion of "a Coal Dealer" that the "opposition has all been engendered and fostered by the" "Forest Improvement Company." Equally untrue is his statement, "that for the first 8 or 10 years the Stockholders of the Mine Hill Company received no returns for the investment of their capital." Nearly a year elapsed between the passage of the *act incorporating* the Mine Hill Railroad Company, and its organization; nearly two years more expired before the completion of a single track of its main line, to the Broad Mountain! Did the Stockholders anticipate deriving a profit out of the *construction* of their road? It was then late in 1831, before a single ton of coal could pass over its tortuous length;—yet so early as 1832, a dividend of 7 per cent was declared, besides leaving a surplus above *all expenditures* of $1,871 73. From that period down to the end of 1847, but a *single* year passed without a dividend being declared, and but one other, in which the dividend was below 9 per cent—during this time the dividend for one year was 10½ per cent. of another 11 per cent, of 2 years 12 per cent. each, of one year 13 per cent. of one year 14 per cent. and of 5 years 15 per cent. each. The total amounting in a short period to 84½ per cent over and above legal interest! Besides these dividends a heavy net balance remained! and it is a singular fact that the rate per cent of the dividends, advanced with the increase of capital, and that in 1846, a surplus of $14,125 36, on that year's business was added to the "depreciation fund;" after paying dividends and all expenses. For evidence of the correctness of these statements we refer to the annual reports of the Mine Hill Company, made to the Legislature under the oath of its proper officer.

Further comment upon the fabrications of "a Coal Dealer" are deemed unnecessary; nor would they have been so far noticed, but that similar devices to distract our attention from the matters at issue between us, and the Mine Hill Railroad Company were too successfully employed in 1846! The dissensions and jealousies then sown among us by the emissaries of that Company enabled it to divide amongst its Stockholders $200,000 of new stock, worth in the market at the moment of its issue $284,000; thus affording them without danger, an *instantaneous and exorbitant* profit; besides entailing upon us the necessity of paying 15 per cent upon the new issue; or $30,000 *annually*, more than could otherwise have been *legally* exacted from us. By like means it is now attempting to smuggle thro' the Legislature, Bill number 235 of the House file, authorizing a further issue of stock to the amount of $750,000, which would at like rates realize to the members of that thriving Company an advance of $315,000. If with a knowledge of these facts, and the certainty that *we* are the sole payers of all these enormous profits; any of us can be induced to abandon the cause we have undertaken, by groundless apprehensions of the Forest Improvement Company, which in reality is powerless against our united strength, we shall have none to censure but ourselves, when we become permanently subjected to a corporation whose tender mercies are embodied in 15 per cent. dividends and an unlimited Depreciation fund.

"MANY OPERATORS."

[For the Miner's Journal.]

MR. EDITOR:—I observe it stated that the rates of toll and transportation on the West Branch Rail Road, are very high compared with those charged on the Reading Rail Road. The statement is incorrect. The toll and transportation on the West Branch Road is in reality less than on the Reading Rail Road. The charge for transporting on the latter Road from Schuylkill Haven to Richmond is $1 50 per ton, which is more than 1½ cents per ton per mile, as the Road is only about 92 miles long; and the Road traverses the whole distance, but its length is in favor of cheap transportation—and the grade is favorable. The West Branch Rail Road is 253 miles long, including 4 side branches, all of which are laid down with heavy iron, and all of which they are compelled to keep in repair for the use of the coal operators at the different points on these branches. The whole bulk of the coal passes over only about *four miles* of the Road—and by far the largest proportion comes within a distance of *nine* miles from Schuylkill Haven—making the whole average distance of the West Branch Road, over which the whole quantity is carried, about *fourteen* miles, on which distance toll and transportation only is paid. Add to this the increased expense of transporting on short roads where there are numerous stoppages and delays, waiting for cars, and the extra charge of the West Branch Road are absolutely less than those charged on the Philadelphia and Reading Rail Road. If the latter Company were compelled to maintain their 93 miles of Road, and the coal transported would cost an average half the distance, we question whether three cents per ton per mile would pay expenses, and 6 per cent. on the investment, with their present facilities.

But what right has the Forest Improvement Company to complain of the rate of toll on the West Branch Rail Road? Did they not ask for and obtain a *Charter*, authorizing them to charge individual operators who might also use their tracks, 1½ cent toll, and one cent to go to the Collector. The West Branch Road only charges 1½ cent toll, and only a half cent for collecting, &c. If the latter is grasping and oppressive, the former must be liable to the same objection to a greater extent.

The West Branch Company have invested $700,000 in making these 25 miles of Rail Road, and stocking it with Engines. This road can transport all the coal offered in that quarter. Now, suppose another Road is constructed at an expense of $700,000, and which must also be supported, does it not follow that the tax in the shape of tolls to be paid by the operators must be doubled also, to support both roads, and make them pay. This is an important question, particularly as experience has demonstrated that the rates of toll and transportation on the short lateral Rail Roads in the region cannot be reduced below 2½ cents per ton per mile, and pay for the investment when the coal is carried over only portions of the Road, and any ideas held out to the contrary will prove to be fallacious. And what right have individual operators to expect that the Forest Improvement and Coal Company will give them greater facilities than the West Branch Rail Road? The latter Company is not engaged in mining, and the sympathies are with the individual operators. The former is engaged in the coal business—they are the competitors of individual operators,—their interests are diametrically oppos