Miners' Journal.

POTTSVILLE, PA.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1855.

AGENTS FOR THE MINERS' JOURNAL.

DAVID J. LEWIS, Mt. Carmel:
ISAAC F. DAVIS, Ashland;
FREDERICK LAUDENSLAGER, Tamaqua;
THOMPSON A. GODFREY, Tremont:
VOLNEY B. PALMER, corner Fifth and Chestnut streets, Philadelphia:
E. W. CARR, South 3d street, Philadelphia:
CRANE & Co., South 3d street, Philadelphia:
WEBSTER & JONES, N. E. corner Third and Race streets, Philadelphia:
C. P. NORTON, Coal Merchant, 52½ Walnut St., Philadelphia.
E. H. BARNES, Gilsey's Buildings, corner Broadway and Courtlandt street, New York:
VOLNEY B. PALMER, Tribune Building, N. York:
CRANE & Co., 102 Nassau street, New York:
S. M. PETTENGILL, 119 Nassau street, N. York:
VISCHER & SCHELL, Appleton's Buildings, Broadway, New York:
V. B. PALMER, Court street, Boston:
S. M. PETTENGILL, State street, Boston:

Who are authorized to recieve subscriptions, advertisements, &c., for the *Miners' Journal*, and receipt for the same.

☞ *THE MINERS' JOURNAL has a larger circulation than any other Newspaper published in Northern Pennsylvania. It circulates among the Coal, Iron and Business men, not only in this and the adjoining Counties, but in all our Cities; and it also circulates largely among the masses in Schuylkill County, which renders it one of the most valuable Advertising mediums in the Country. But few Papers have so many Capitalists enrolled on their subscription Lists.*

BUSINESS NOTICES.

SEE George Miller's Notice.

SEE Assignee's Public Sale, of F. J. Parvin, Assignee of Thomas Gorman.

PLUMBING AND GAS FITTING.—See N. M. Newnam's advertisement.

SEE Letter from St. Mary's, Elk Co., Pa., relative to the Ridgway Company's Land.

SEE "Adjourned Public Sale" of Jacob Hamner.

FOR SALE.—M. A. & S. Bertolet & Co., of Reading have some Railroad Iron for sale. See advertisement.

LANDS TO LEASE AND FOR SALE.—See advertisements of N. P. Hosack, 32 Trinity Building, New York.

RAILROAD IRON.—A. & P. Roberts, Broad street below Vine, Philadelphia, have some for sale. See advertisement.

COACHES BETWEEN ASHLAND AND POTTSVILLE.—Cockell & Brother have commenced running a line of coaches between Ashland and Pottsville. As this line has been started to accommodate the public, it should be liberally patronized. For hours of starting, fare, &c., see advertisement.

WANTED, at this Office, an Apprentice to the printing business. A boy about 15 or 16 years of age, of good moral character, who has received a good education. None other need apply.

MAIL ROBBERY.—On Sunday morning, a mail bag containing letters for Buffalo, was found on a lot near Philadelphia, cut open and rifled of its contents.

FIRE AND LOSS OF LIFE.—In Alexandria Va., on Friday night, the china store of Jas. I. Dowell was destroyed by fire. Loss, $15,000. Six firemen were killed, and four seriously injured by the falling of the wall.

UNDER WAY.—The projected railway between Tamaqua and Lehighton, a distance of 17 miles, is in course of construction. New York interest is building this Road, for the purpose of tapping the Catawissa road, and diverting trade, via. Tamaqua to New York. Wide awake place, that Gotham.

THE GIRARD LANDS.—Mr. H. W. Poole, the well known surveyor and mining engineer, is engaged in perfecting a geological and topographical survey of these lands—owned by the City of Philadelphia—at Mahoney. The survey is being made for the purpose of developing at no distant day, the rich mineral deposits underlying this valuable property. Upon the completion of the survey by Mr. Poole, the land will be laid out according to the manner in which the veins of Coal run, for leasing purposes. These lands if productive, will prove a valuable accession to the aggregate wealth of the Anthracite Coal Region.

THE HOME JOURNAL.—This widely circulated and popular family journal commences a new volume on the first of January next.—The peculiar literary contents of the *Home Journal* render it a capital medium between the ordinary weekly newspaper and the monthly magazine. The new volume will appear in an improved mechanical form, and will commence with a new novel from the pen of the well known, well appreciated author, N. P. Willis, one of the editors of the paper. It is entitled "Paul Fane; or, Parts of a Life Else Untold." Those who do not take and desire to receive weekly, a first class family paper, would do well to subscribe to the *Home Journal*.

SUNBURY AND ERIE RAILROAD.—The work of uniting the Anthracite Coal Region with Western New York, by the Sunbury and Erie Railroad, is nearly completed. The last span of the bridge over the Susquehanna river, on the Northumberland side of the island, was put up last week, and the bridge on the Sunbury side is nearly up. Both will be sufficiently completed for the passage of locomotives and trains before the first of January. Workmen are also engaged in making the road to connect the Sunbury and Erie with the Philadelphia and Sunbury Railroad, on the east side of the river, and a considerable force is now at work on the Island, preparing the tracks between the bridges.

CHARCOAL AS A DISINFECTANT.—The power of Charcoal has been shown by filling vessels with putrid matter, and then allowing the air which supplied an apartment to pass through the foetid mass, it was found to be perfectly inodorous—therefore, on this principle, it is believed by some that Charcoal had the power of removing any matters likely to produce disease. Mr. Robert Hunt, F. R. S., Keeper of Mining Records, &c., of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, in a recent lecture, said that he thought it a mistake to conclude that any body, because it was a deodorizer, is necessarily a disinfectant. By way of illustration, if may be stated that, in unloading a ship laden with Charcoal, at Balaklava, the men were covered with Charcoal, and were constantly even inhaling it; nevertheless, no less than ten fatal cases of cholera happened on board that ship, while vessels in the neighborhood, differently laden, escaped altogether.

CONVENTION OF ANTI-NEBRASKA-INFAMY ERRORS.—The suggestion which we have already adverted to, in regard to a Convention of the members of the Editorial profession who are opposed to the Nebraska swindle, and the truckling Administration in power, seems, we perceive, with favor throughout the State. We now ask, would it not be better to hold it at Harrisburg about the period that the American State Convention assembles there? Many would then be enabled to attend both, and harmony of action in the future would result from it, thereby proving beneficial to the cause, which is antagonistical to the despicable Pierce Sham, Democracy. Independent of politics, it would also be an admirable opportunity for the proprietors of the opposition press to meet their brethren in Convention, and confer upon matters of importance to the business welfare of the press of Pennsylvania. As the State Central Temperance Committee has called a Convention, to assemble at Harrisburg about the 22d of January, we would suggest a sufficient period than that for the Editorial Convention to which we have referred.

European Correspondence

OF THE MINERS' JOURNAL.

UNDERGROUND WALKS IN ENGLAND.

"The Black Country."

No. 6.

DUDLEY, SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE, Sept., '55.

DEAR JOURNAL:—The most important bed of Coal in the "black country" *is thirty feet thick.*—Seven miles in length, four in breadth, nearly 18,000 acres in all of a solid mass of fuel, ten yards thick, this is without doubt the most valuable single stratum underlying the surface of Great Britain. Why just to think of one uninterrupted thickness of carbon as high as the windows of a third story Philadelphia house, and of sufficient extent to block up the length and breadth of the Delaware river from Trenton to New Castle; and all this lying at a paltry depth to leave the surface with a gentle dip and just enough up-throws or faults to raise the bed within easy access to the miner when its dip would otherwise sink it too far beneath his reach. The *greatest* thickness of all the seams of bituminous Coal in the Pennsylvania division of the Allegheny Coal field at any one work is *above* or available spot is twenty feet; here is a *single* bed (whose area however we must not forget might be taken 500 times out of the Pennsylvania field without near exhausting it) of one and a half times that total thickness. Eight hundred and fifty million tons of Coal would furnish one ton to *every* man, woman and child in the known world, and yet this is the amount originally contained in the 'ten yard seam' of the "Black Country." The quantity sent by railroad and canal into Philadelphia from the Schuylkill region last week, exceeded 88,000 tons—at this rate both railway and canal might go on working for 200 years before exhausting the 'thick Coal of Dudley.' The average price of Coal at the pit' mouth in England is 5s. 1½d. or $1,24 per ton; the value of this bed, supposing it all to be raised to the surface is consequently 1150 millions of dollars, or enough money to build twelve Pacific railroads at the highest estimate yet made for that important project. Supposing it all in the market at Birmingham, an average distance from where it is mined of five miles; its value would be 3500 millions of dollars, sufficient to discharge at once the national debt of England.

Without some familiar illustrations like these, it is really difficult to conceive of the ecumenical importance of a bed of this size occurring at an average depth of only 100 yards from the surface and in quality exceeding that of any of the thinner beds comprised in the same district.

It is generally esteemed, both for household purposes and the manufacture of iron, though owing to the cockney preference for the fat, smoking Coals of the north "old Wallsend or nothing," few of the Staffordshire Coals, which are of the kind denominated *White ash*, have yet found their way to the metropolis. The greater portion is absorbed by the 148 blast furnaces in the district, for which it is used after being coked in long piles in the open air. There are no coking ovens in the "Black Country," why I could not understand. The uniformity and thickness in the several varieties, averaging forty-two per cent. exceeds the mean of the much esteemed coking Coals of New Castle, which is less than forty per cent. To this day New Castle or Durham coke is imported into South Staffordshire for the use of the remelting furnaces in the manufacture of best iron. For the high smelting furnaces, however the indigenous Coals are invaluable, producing every year 600,000 tons of pig metal, an amount which exceeds the annual production of Pennsylvania, with 500 times the Coal area of the "Black Country."

Returning to the ten yard seam of Dudley, we will with the readers' permission accompany him down one of the pits where it is mined, and view the manner of working out a stratum of such unusual thickness. It is only fair, however, to apprise him first, that owing to this great thickness there is constant danger of accidents from the fall of the roof, and besides that arising from the presence of gas, which necessarily accumulates in large quantities where such an enormous body of air has to be moved in the process of ventilation; as far as the increased risk of descending into the thick Coal mines compared with the thin Coal mines can be estimated by figures, the thing stands thus:

A thick Coal miner gets 25 cents more per day than a thin Coal miner.

The widows of the thick Coal miners supported by the colliers "unions," whose husbands have been killed in the mines, is about double the number, so supported, of the widows of thin Coal miners.

Having now eased our conscience by fairly setting the case before him, should the reader still feel disposed to proceed, we will just give the hint to the blacksmith at the pit's mouth, who will shout out to the engineer in the little house, two or three hundred feet off, to go "slowly down, two gentlemen in the skip;" and, without more ado, step into the bucket.

But halt, what is it the banksman's saying? "Forgot gentlemen, but can't go down now—its prayers below—have to wait a while. "Prayers," we reply, "do you have prayers down *there*?" "Oh yes, bless you, they has 'em every day after dinner." With a puzzled stare, we ask for further explanation, and receive the answer of the good natured banksman somewhat in this way. "Why, you see sir, there's a good many Methodees among 'em, and every day after dinner, they gathers 'em all together, and reads passages out of the Scriptures, and then has prayers, you know, before they goes to hewing again." "Is it possible," we hardly exclaim, "that even the heart of the 'Black Country,' which has earned for itself so unenviable a reputation, scenes like this are daily transpiring in the dark confined galleries of her Coal mines, a hundred yards below the surface, and far removed from every eye but the All-seeing one? Surely if even the religious feeling was shorn of attendant pomp and circumstance, it must be so, when presented by a lot of Methodee colliers in the avenues of their subterranean work place, and surrounded by the black damp walls of carbon, which it is their daily duty to excavate."

Whilst the Colliers below are finishing their service, let us above employ the interval in examining the pit and its concomitants—and first, we notice that it is not a wire rope to which we are about to trust ourselves in this descent, but a peculiar made chain which prevails universally in South Staffordshire. Four short links, making up a width of about four inches, into which are linked four others presenting their thickness instead of breadth, and so on alternating, with blocks of wood filling up the cavities of the latter ones, from the Staffordshire colliery chain of a flat convenient shape for winding, but very heavy, weighing probably as much as forty pounds to the yard, or two tons to a pit, which is quite an item, and should lead, I think, to its abandonment in favor of the flat wire rope. This last is an exceedingly light plaited rope, weighing only one-third as much as the chain, and though costing about twice as much in original outlay, yet by reason of the great saving in the duty to be performed by the engine, must prove a good investment. The wire ropes are universally used in the deep collieries of Lancashire, Yorkshire and New Castle, where they have been found to increase the power of drawing, in some instances by thirty tons per day. A number that we saw in Lancashire had been in constant use for eighteen months uninjured.—In the "Black Country" there is a great prejudice against them, and the proprietors will tell you that it would be as much as they could do to get the miners to descend with them—but this is all a delusion, and both their safety and economy, have been abundantly proved in the deep shafts of the North of England. At the Ariey mine, Incehall, a round wire rope was in use along an underground incline, winding up Coal from "the deep" by a powerful underground engine; its duty was enormous, but it gave great satisfaction.

Many Philadelphians will recollect some sixteen years ago, when the wire rope was first introduced into America. It was applied to one of the hoisting machines of the Philadelphia tobacco warehouses. It is now generally used on railroad and canal inclines, for steamboat tillers, and in many collieries in the United States, but there, as here, I believe opinion is divided as to its utility. The Staffordshire chain costs $1,75 per yard; it has the advantage over hemp both as regards expense and safety, that in one row may break, and the other three support the burden without fear of accident.

The pit we are about to descend like most all in the "Black Country," is remarkable for its small diameter, only six feet, (some do not exceed five,) and for its primitive arrangements for raising and lowering the loads. The present one is lined with brick, costing altogether about $40 per yard—it is furnished with slides to guide whatever, and the motion of the load is very unsteady. a bare platform on which the odd looking bucket or "skip" is wheeled up, at the top and slid at the bottom, comprises the extent of its *furniture*. These skips are different in Staffordshire from any other part of England, and consist merely of a flat carbody with sides perhaps six inches high, and a number of light iron bands with an eye in each part, to secure the Coal as it is piled up on the carbodies. They carry a ton of Coal—their cost is a trifle, eight or ten dollars, and the facility of unloading them as well as their light weight recommends them. I have met with these skips nowhere out of Staffordshire.

The tramways about the pit's mouth consist of lengths of rail of the T shape, being wrought iron with wrought iron sleepers at every six feet;—the cost of this tram, of which there must be laid in the mines and about the pits of the 'Black Country' Colliery, hundreds of miles, is about 40 cents per foot. A great proportion of that can remain with by cast iron, but latterly the wrought iron train has been introduced and preferred.

But by the time we have completed all the observations, the 'banksman' is waiting for us to commence our descent, which we do and are quickly at the bottom, where we find prayers over, and every one returned to the scene of his usual labors.

To the site of these labors we must previously be we wish to see the mode of working out the ten yard seam, and here the contractor or "getter," who really represents the 'master' under ground than there, we are most indebted into stall No. 1. To understand the *locale* of working these stalls, it is well to premise that very as was the case of the thick Coal stratum originally, the many generations which have honeycombed away at it since first pit Coal was applied (within the very Region) to the manufacture of iron, have materially reduced its proportions, so that of this day a very small band of unopened or "maiden Coal" is the future terra firma. Finding such an immense bed of valuable fuel within easy reach, the ironmasters of the present race unmindful of posterity, proceeded grossly without system or science to excavate all they could with ease and safety to themselves. Some times when the roof proved stubborn, they would content themselves with the entire 30 feet thickness of Coal, but as they would only remove two or three yards of the lowermost bench of workable Coal, immediately under the bed on which were, until the strata shifted, pillars of coal of sufficient strength to be named with safety. Sometimes, especially when troubled with water, they would rise to within eight or ten feet of the roof and there proceed to fill things around a dry spot, and commence all afresh again, their work for ever progressing in a retrograde, or through, and through dale movement every generation, as though the ironmaster for the present time's only concern was the matter for the present time's only concern was the matter for the present time's only concern was the matter