

in which much judgment and humanity are often to be noticed, but in the irregular and accidental manner (depending on distribution of property, private interests, &c.) in which the sites of collieries are chosen, and their field of work defined. Many portions of country are thus left full of unattainable coal; others untouched from dread of the water in long-abandoned works: beds of coal, of inferior quality or thickness, are abandoned till the future scarcity of fuel shall render it profitable to work them, under great disadvantages. Finally, as the thickness of the entire coal series often exceeds 1000 yards, and it is only in the Newcastle and Durham tract that pits descend even to 500, and then brave great dangers and difficulties, it is clear that, however long the coal of Great Britain may last, its price must gradually rise, because the cost of its production, relative to that of other articles of consumption, is necessarily on the increase. It is thus that coal will become scarce; and if the country be not yet sufficiently enlightened in this matter to prepare the way for some act of legislative wisdom, the time of trial may not be far remote.

It is a striking fact that no known coal district in the British islands (excepting, perhaps, a small part of Ayrshire) is unwrought: most of them are covered by manufactures; and ere long the geologist will be called upon to decide as to the propriety of sinking for coal in situations where it does not appear on the surface, yet is really spread beneath our feet in areas, perhaps, not less extensive than some of our largest coal fields. It *may* exist, for instance, beneath the plains of Cheshire, but who will have the boldness to penetrate the red sandstone, in search of that which may be placed by nature at an unattainable depth?

On the continent of Europe the carboniferous system is variously and locally developed in France, Belgium, Westphalia, Saxony, Bohemia, on the north of the Carpathians, &c. One of the most important deposits of coal and mountain limestone begins at Hardingen,