

work 'On the Coal Question,' showed that if the increase of our population goes on as it has been doing in years past, and if the productive industry of the country keep pace with the population, the whole of the coal now available in the country would be exhausted in 110 years. Mr. John Stuart Mill, taking alarm, in his place in Parliament urged upon the nation to act as worthy trustees for their descendants, to save money while there is yet time, and to pay off as much as possible of the national debt; and by-and-by, at the instance of Mr. Vivian, a Coal Commission was appointed to examine into this alarming state of affairs.

The result as regards the duration of coal was stated in the three following hypotheses:—the first is, that the population and manufactures of the country have nearly attained a maximum amount, or will merely oscillate without advancing. In this case our coal may last for about 1,273 years, an opinion to which Mr. Hunt of the 'Mining Record' Office still adheres. The second, according to Mr. Price Williams, is this:—The population of Great Britain in 1871 was 26,943,000. According to a given law of increase, in the year 2231, the population may be 131,700,000, in fact, near 132,000,000, or rather more than five times the present number. It is hard to realise this crowded population in our little country, but allowing the assumption to be correct, in a hundred years from 1871 the population of Britain would be very nearly 59,000,000, and the home consumption of coal 274,200,000 tons a year, in which case our coal will only last about 360 years. A third view is that adding 'a constant quantity equal to the annual increase (of consumption) of the last 14 years, which we may take at 3,000,000