

foundation of increasing population, riches, and power, and of improvement in almost every Art which administers to the necessities and comforts of Mankind. And, however remote may

new purposes to which the steam engine is continually applied, its consumption is advancing at a rapidly accelerating rate; it is of most portentous interest to a nation, that has so large a portion of its inhabitants dependent for existence on machinery, kept in action only by the use of coal, to economize this precious fuel. I cannot, therefore, conclude this interesting subject without making some remarks upon a practice which can only be viewed in the light of a national calamity, demanding the attention of the legislature.

We have, during many years witnessed the disgraceful and almost incredible fact, that more than a million chaldrons per annum, being nearly one third part of the best coals produced by the mines near Newcastle, have been condemned to wanton waste, on a fiery heap perpetually blazing near the mouth of almost every coal pit in that district.

This destruction originated mainly in certain legislative enactments, providing that Coal in London should be sold, and the duty upon it be rated, by *measure*, and not by *weight*. The smaller Coal is broken, the greater the space it fills; it became, therefore, the interest of every dealer in Coal, to buy it of as large a size, and to sell it of as small a size as he was able. This compelled the Proprietors of the Coal-mines to send the large Coal only to market, and to consign the small Coal to destruction.

In the year 1830, the attention of Parliament was called to these evils; and pursuant to the Report of a Committee, the duty on Coal was repealed, and Coal directed to be sold by *weight* instead of *measure*. The effect of this change has been, that a considerable quantity of Coal is now shipped for the London Market, in the state in which it comes from the pit; that after landing the cargo, the small coal is separated by skreening from the rest, and answers as fuel for various ordinary purposes, as well as much of the Coal which was sold in London before the alteration of the law.