

NOTES

ON

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By B. Irwin.

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PREFACE.

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WHEN tendering the following pages to the notice of the public, I have no pretensions to literary ability, but a simple recital of the passing events that have taken place for the last fifty-eight years, of which I have been a keen observer the greater portion of that time. It is briefly the simple annals of the place where I have spent the greatest part of my life.

Seeing various publications on Weardale by Mr. Eggestone; also Mr. Lee's Historical Notes on Haydon Bridge; there is a tract of country that lies between those two places called Allendale, which place I have known since I was eight years of age.

In those days of pack horses, spinning wheels, cock-fighting, and superstition; when I used to sit upon the top of the "peat neuck" at nights, and listen to the old people tell of their exploits—when they were young men—in wrestling, boxing, and feats of strength; while they verified the existence of ghosts and hobgoblins, till I scarcely durst go to the door after dark. I have wondered at no one writing its History, as Allendale has produced a great many really intelligent working men. There is something pleasing in perusing the history of the place where we have been born and brought up.

There are very few of my old acquaintances left whom I knew when I was a boy, the greater part of them being numbered with the dead. There are often a good many challenge me when I visit The Dale—who were beardless boys when I left—whom I do not know, although some I can recognise by the features of their parents, as I knew every one in the upper, and a great many in the lower, part of The Dale when I left. I must say I respect the people of Allendale, as they are kind hearted and social even to a stranger; and have risen from a state of superstition and ignorance, to be as intelligent as any of the working classes.

The aspect of the country is as much altered as the manners of its inhabitants. It is transformed from a bare wilderness to a beautiful woodland country. Indeed, it is the most beautiful fell head place I have seen anywhere.

I have taken much pains to ascertain the dates of the various incidents that have taken place, although I have failed in some instances.

If the reader experiences as much pleasure in perusing the following pages, as the Author has had in producing them, he (the Author) will be gratified to think that his labour has not been in vain.

THE AUTHOR.

*Haydon Bridge,
October, 1830.*



NOTES ON ALLENDALE.



ALLENDALE is a small market town and parish, situated on an eminence on the south bank of the Allen, and is overlooked by the heights on both sides of the rapid brook which gives name to this dale and parish, and which is comprehended in the south division of Hexhamshire and Tindale Ward.

The town of Allendale stands 10 miles S.W. of Hexham, 11 miles E.N.E. of Alston, and 286 miles N.N.W. of London. It contains upwards of 1000 inhabitants and 200 well-built dwelling-houses, and has a small market, which is held every Friday in a spacious market-place, in which are the butchers' shambles and the ruins of a cross. Fairs are also held here annually on the last Friday in April (old style), on the 22nd of August, and on the first Friday after the 29th of October, for the sale of horned cattle, horses, &c. Hirings for servants are also held at the April and November fairs.

The parish of Allendale is very extensive, being about 12 miles in length from north to south, and 10 miles in breadth from east to west. It exhibits, in general, a sterile and desolate aspect, and abounds with rugged and frowning elevations, which, however, conceal mineral treasures of great value. It contains seven lead mines, which produce annually upwards of 2500 tons of lead. These rich mines are wholly the property of Colonel and Lady Diana Beaumont, the Lord and Lady of the manor.

In 1792 an Act of Parliament was obtained for enclosing, allotting, and stinting Hexhamshire and Allendale common, which

Manors of Lord Allendale

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always went first, and was named "The Raker" or bell-horse, because a portion of them had a bell attached to them for a guide to the others while crossing the moors after dark or when it was misty, as was often the case on these fells. I have seen very wild work among them when they have been laden with timber for the mines. Each load was from 4 to 6 feet in length, tied across their wooden saddles and coming in contact with each other sometimes caused the loads to get under their bellies, and it is natural to think they would be affrighted.

The drivers of the ponies were generally strong robust men, two of whom I will make remarks upon. There was John Jackson who lived at Sparty Lea, and kept sometimes eight and sometimes ten ponies, and a mule which he called "his devil," as it was very wicked and bad to load; but, Jackson being a low, thick, and exceedingly strong man, used to hold the mule by main force while he threw the two bags of ore on to its back. When the weather was fair, Betty, his wife, had to go with him to catch the ponies, while he was loading them. I have often seen her riding on the back of those ponies, with a man's weather-beat hat on her head. Jackson was not satisfied with his day's work with the galloways, but went to pump water in the mines at night; and it has always been a saying that nobody beat the world with hard work in Allendale but Jackson. He kept a cow, but did not allow his wife to make any butter if he knew it, as he said it was unnatural to churn milk into butter. I have heard a story about him being at Carlisle market dressed in the garb of a beggar, as he generally was; when he went to a stall in the market and priced some bacon; the vender took him for a beggar and told him a very low price so that he might circulate it round the country; but Jackson laid his hand upon it and said he would take the whole; but the dealer was not for parting with it at the price he had asked Jackson; but as he had plenty of witnesses to the offer, he put his hand into his greasy breeches pocket and pulled out an old greasy purse with a large sum of money in it, and got the bacon.

Another of those poney owners was John French, who kept a number of them at Knock Shield, with two and sometimes three draught horses and carts. His brother Joseph went with the last named. John was a man of prodigious strength, and many a one went to see him load his ponies, which seemed quite an easy job for him to throw the eight stone bags on to the galloways' backs and then help his brother to load the carts. John was at a place once

where they could not get the carts near enough to load them, when he threw an eight stone bag of ore over each shoulder, one in his teeth, and one in each hand, and carried them up the hill to the carts. I always thought John had a pleasant countenance, although I cannot say I ever saw him with a clean face.

A portion of the miners had small farms (cheap) where they kept from one to three head of cattle, besides a few sheep, with a right of common, and a number of them kept a pony to work their farm work and lead firings, and to ride upon to market, &c.

There were very few coals consumed in Allendale, owing to the roads being so bad, and the nearest pits being at Stubliock and Kingswood Ridge; therefore they cut peats on the moors, which was a very labourious job for both men and women. The men cut them out of the moss with a small spade for this purpose, made in the shape of an L, while the females had forks with shanks about 5 feet long, with which they spread them out to dry. After being half dry they were set upon their ends, four or five together, till they were nearly dry, when they were put into small heaps called 'windtows'; after being well dried they were carted across the fell and taken home and built into stacks 7 or 8 feet high, and a good many yards in length. I have known some families have as many as 80 cartloads. They had lathed coups so as to make the cart as light as possible, to keep it from sinking while coming over the moss; but it is a common occurrence for them to have the pony laired with a load of peats behind him. Those who burnt peats had a recess by the side of the fireplace called a "peat neuck," which held from four to six "swillfulls," which was filled every night. When bedtime came there was a few peats put under the bars and covered with the ashes which were always red hot, and when they were put in the bars in the morning, and a few dry ones put upon them, they had a blazing fire in five minutes. If it was a wet peat season some were very sore starved; but there was another sort of fuel much used in some parts of the dale, and that was crow coal, which they worked after sinking pits on the moors, and mixing the coal with a portion of clay and made into round balls. They made a very hot fire after they got right hold. These were called "cats." These coals, like the peats, were very bad to convey across the moors in wet seasons.

There was generally a large assembly of those who were located in different districts to discuss the news they had when they had been at home over the week's end; and it is amusing to think at

the present moment of their ignorance and superstition. They believed in elves, ghosts, and witches, which was a nightly chat, so as to have us boys very much affrighted to go to the door after dark. There were witches and boggies in different parts of the dale, according to their belief; and I have known some carry witch wood in their pockets (a piece of rowantree) to keep the witches away from them. But they had not the chance of instruction in those days as at present. Newspapers were 7½d. each. Old Moor's almanack, that we now get for 1d., was 4½d. at that time, as duty was on both paper and printing, which made printed matter very dear, and the carriage of letters was expensive, there being then no penny post established. I sometimes got a letter from my brother in London, for which I paid 1s. 2d.

There were only seven day schools in the dale that I can remember, but there was one at Sipton Plantation House that is not mentioned in the directory. The school where I received my education was at Allenheads. The Rev. William Walton being master, assisted by Matthew Shield and William Pears. Lady Diana visited the school every summer, when she paid a visit to Allenheads, and seemed to take a great interest in us. She examined us all, asking our names and where we lived, with an exhortation to be good boys and girls. I remember one Christmas some of the larger boys took it into their heads to lock the door against the masters, to beg for a long holiday, in imitation of some other schools; but the priest was quite offended, and flogged some of the ringleaders very severely. I remember at the same time the scholars barred the door against Mr. Hugh Shield at St. Peter's school, which was the custom. When he came to the door and asked what was the matter, they told him they wanted six weeks holiday for Christmas, when he offered them one half; but after reasoning a little they generally got a bargain for a month, when they opened the door; and, with the master's consent, they borrowed a large pan, and contributed ½d. or 1d. each, which they expended in treacle, and boiled and divided it amongst themselves.

I used to work with an elderly man, whom I have often heard relate a circumstance which occurred while he was at school. It seems he lived a distance from Allendaletown, but went there for his education; at that time the Rev. Mr. Westmoreland was head master. He had a school companion who lived in Allendaletown, and both were fond of a lark. A daft boy used to follow them out at play-time. One year, on the 1st of April, they went out to play as

usual, when A. followed; and being busy making April fools of each other, a thought came into their heads that they would have the priest made a fool of amongst the rest; so they called to A. and told him to send his reverence to such a place, that one wanted to speak to him; but A. refused, as he said the priest would flog him; but they told him they would give him a good beating at night if he did not obey them; so he consented, if they would always let him go with them. After they had been in school a short time, A. came in and went up to the priest, and after making a bow said, "Please, Mr. Westmoreland, you have to go to Miss Rowell's, there is one wants you." The priest took his hat down, and went away with all speed, but he was not long in returning in a rage, and called A. to his desk, and asked him who told him that he (the priest) had to go to Miss Rowell's. "Nepoty tell'd me,— but the lads were making 'April Gouks' o' yen another, se ah thought ah wad make yen o' ye." When he heard the daft boy's wit, as he thought it, he could not help laughing; and A. escaped his flogs that time.

Weddings and Christenings.—The high chapels not being licensed for marriages, they were all celebrated at Allendaletown. They were all riding weddings from the upper part of the dale. The ponies were borrowed from their neighbours, and then it was tried who kept the best galloway amongst those small farmers. The pony that got first to the wedding house was sent home with his head bunched with ribbons, while the last one got a quarter pound of tobacco. It so happened that some of the females had never been on horseback before that day, and of course many a one tumbled of if they were not laced on to their seats. Before the bride was taken into the house, a plateful of bride's cake was thrown over her head to secure good luck the remainder of her life. But there was never a wedding on a Friday, as it was considered an unlucky day for shiftings or to commence anything.

It was the custom at christenings for the woman who carried the child to church to have a good-sized piece of spice loaf and cheese with her, to give to the first one they met, to secure good luck for the child. If it was a boy, and if the first they met was a female, its good luck was sure. If the child was a girl, it was lucky to meet a man.

It was the custom at Martinmas for two or four to join and have a "mart," that is, a fat beast amongst them. Some got a whole one, according to family and prospect of pay at the year's

end. I have seen as many as ten or twelve, and sometimes more, of these animals come to the upper part of the dale to be slaughtered for winter's beef. There was always a throng of young men congregated on these slaughtering days, to see who was the best at felling the animals. Those who struck at the beast's head and did not knock it down, forfeited 6d. each, which was drunk after the beast was bled; while the one who knocked it down got a share of the forfeits; but there was often a deal of unfair work practiced, as those who were holding the animal's head often made a slip when the blow was delivered, so as to make a miss. The greater part of the price of the animal's skin was often spent in drink; this was familiarly called "skelping the hide."

There were only two regular butchers in the upper part of the dale, viz.:—Mr. Bownass at Allenheads, and Mr. Harrison, West Allen, who went to Allenheads on Thursdays, when he could get for the snow in winter. Beef and Mutton were generally about 4d. or 4½d. per pound, and pork 4s. 6d. or 5s. per stone; tea, 8s. per lb.; sugar, 10d. and 10½d. per lb.; currants, 10½d. per lb.; candles, 6½d. and 7d. per lb.; salt, 7s. per st.; butter, 7d. and 8d., but there was no uniform weight, as the butter makers had a piece of lead for a weight, which was from 18 to 21 ounces, till there was an act passed for it to be 16 oz. to the pound. New milk, 2d. per quart; old milk, ½d.; and it was often 4 quarts of butter-milk for 1d. We often got eggs from Hexhamshire at 36 for 1s. Articles of wearing apparel were dear, as Arkwright had not got the spinning jennies fairly into play. Those who had families bought wool and took it to the factories to get carded, after which the big spinning wheel was on the floor for a few weeks to spin yarn for stockings, and to send to the weaver to make into cloth for home wear, and a part bought "lint" to spin on the small wheel to make into shirts. The floors were seldom washed or scoured, but swept with a besom and a large quantity of sand thrown thereon. Indeed, the females had something else to do than wash the floors at that time.

The dress of the females in those days was generally a coarse linsy gown or bedgown, with a petticoat of the same material, and a bonnet like a coal-scuttle for size; they nearly all wore clogs, except on Sundays, when they wore shoes, as boots were not in the fashion then, and were very expensive at that time. It got into fashion about 1823 as soon as a female arrived to womanhood for her to have a white cap upon her head when she dressed herself,

and they used to strive who could have the neatest "nett cap," as they called them, till some wag made a song about them, which was sung at the markets and fairs; it was named "The Dandy Cap." I will give three verses from memory:—

Of all the fashions of the day,
Our bonnie lasses bear the sway;
For everyone has got the neck
To wear the frill and "Dandy Cap."
Some bonnets will hold a bag of coal,
Which makes them look so very droll;
If their shifts be ever so ragged and black,
They must have on their "Dandy Cap."

As I was going to the fair,
I met with Jenny, I do declare,
She had no shift upon her back,
And yet she wore a "Dandy Cap."

The song was the means of causing the caps to be discontinued; after which the young ones dressed in their hair, and left the old ones to wear the caps. About the same time it was the fashion for young men to wear corduroy knee breeches, with slender shoes tied with ribbon; but that was soon discontinued, and it was left for the old men to wear them; and nearly all of them substituted trousers for breeches. Indeed, at one time it was quite common for a local preacher to stand in the pulpit with a home-spun suit upon his back, and a pair of clogs on his feet. A great many went to church with their clogs on in winter time.

Umbrellas came into fashion in the dale somewhere between 1820 and 1826, although they were patented in London by John Hornsby as far back as 1786. Many of the old people condemned those useful articles, and said they were for nothing else than pride, although nearly every family have them at the present day.

There was a sheep fair at Burnfoot annually in September, familiarly called the "Tup Fair" but is now removed to Allenheads Corn Mill, kept by Mr. W. Spark, where there is a good show, and prizes given for cattle, sheep, and horses, besides butter, and is numerous attended, and is often a good fair. A ball was held annually at Burnfoot on the night of St. Thomas's or shortest day, when the young men took their sweethearts to the dance, where they got bread, cheese, and beer, for which they paid 1s. 6d. each. The public-house has now been discontinued at Burnfoot nearly 30 years. There was another kind of night work at that time during the winter nights. A portion of the poor widows put up notice

papers for the charitably-disposed to come and spend their sixpences at their house on a certain night, when there was a musician engaged for the occasion. The young men flocked together with their sweethearts to dance and have a join for "Touatrot," if they chose, which was generally kept up till a late hour. If the widow was well respected, a good many of their neighbours often sent her 6d. each; and I have known some receive from 30s. to 40s. at such times.

There was a pack of Harehounds kept at Allenheads, which was generally hunted on Saturdays. The master of the hounds being Albany Crowthall, Esq., who had a remarkably wise hunting horse named "Bangtail." I have heard him relate he was once riding up the shire, when he had occasion to dismount. He threw the bridle reins on to the neck of the horse, and lay down in pretence of sleeping; but the poor animal stood over him for awhile, and then put his nose under him to awake him. The hounds were generally headed at 8 o'clock in the morning during the season, when they often killed a number of hares. After which they retired to the public-house to spend the evening in joviality and singing songs; such as the following was a favourite:—

No joys can compare to the hunting of the hare

In the morning, in the morning; being fine and pleasant weather,

With our horses and our hounds, we will gallop o'er the ground,
Singing tantarra, singing tantarra, my brave boys, we will follow, &c.

There was also a pack of hounds kept at Allendale Town; and another pack in Weardale, for the amusement of the miners belonging Mr. Beaumont's various works.

There was another sort of amusement the young men practised much at one time, viz.: what they called buckstick. It much resembled the game of cricket; but it was a round stick about a yard long, instead of a bat; and a bit of stick two inches long, instead of a ball.

There were two excellent bands in the dale; one at Allendale-town and the other at Allenheads. The latter got great credit at Alnwick, during the great election, for its splendid performances. Mr. Beaumont bought each member of the band a military suit; also a blue coat with brass buttons, and black trousers. It was named Beaumont's band. They had every encouragement; he found them the best teacher that could be got, besides a certain sum of money for every time they met for practice.

There were very few strangers travelling through the dale, but pedlars, smugglers, and beggars. A portion of those came every month when the subsistence cash was paid, which they all knew as well as the miners themselves. I remember a man of small stature, named Jonathan Dowson, coming down the road to Allenheads, when a boy discovered him, who ran into the house exclaiming, "Daddy, come out and see a little lad, that's been a man once!" Jonathan, who was a native of Wolsingham, was about four feet high; with a big head and beard. Once a tall man was mocking Jonathan owing to his stature, when Jonathan proposed a wager that he would make a chalk mark higher than the tall man, both to stand erect, and the little man to choose his ground. When the money was put down, Jonathan put his shoulder under the little of the fire-place, which was his own height, put his hand up the chimney, and made his mark. It is needless to say the small man won by a good deal.

The 12th of August generally brought a few of the aristocracy into the dale to shoot grouse; as they are often very abundant on these moors. In former years they often had a tent on the moors, which was removed every day to suit the convenience of the gentlemen. I was reading an anecdote in a book, entitled "A Thousand Notable Things"; it was as follows:—During the last century, Sir Walter Blackett, being on a shooting excursion on the moors adjoining to Weardale, entered a poor shepherd's cot to rest a little; they brought him bread, butter, milk, and such fare as they had. He asked who that cottage belonged; when the shepherd replied, "To one of the best men in the world, to Sir Walter Blackett." "And do you live comfortably," asked Sir Walter. "No," replied the shepherd; "we used to live very comfortably, but the house has all gone to wreck; and those roguish stewards have doubled my rent, so that I can hardly get a living in any fashion; but if I saw his lordship I would inform him." Sir Walter did not make himself known to the shepherd; but he got the cottage rebuilt, and the rent reduced to the old standard, so that the shepherd lived comfortably the rest of his life.

In 1822 or 1823 *The Primitive Methodists* first came to this dale; the first preachers being Batty, followed by Mr. Pearson. After preaching a few times in the open air, some of the miners became converts, and took them to their houses to hold services: they have done a great amount of good in Allendale. It was a good while before either the Wesleyans or they could get Chapels

in the high part of the dale, as the upper classes opposed them very much, but they had a few persevering individuals amongst them, and at the present time they have each a number, of which I will treat a little further in this work.

In May, 1826, an Act was passed to make a new road from Cow's Hill down Allendale to Branchend, to join the Alston turnpike, near Langley Mills, which brought a great influx of strangers into the dale. There were English, Scotch, Irish, and Welsh; and a rough lot they were. It was shocking to see the fighting and rows every month when they had their pay; and a great many shopkeepers and others were duped by giving them credit. Many took lodgers who had large families. Amongst the latter was one Hannah Philipson, who had a number of sons and one daughter; a part of them were come to maturity. She lived about half-a-mile west of Allenheads, and took two Irishmen for lodgers, the one named Ned Mucklehotton, and the other Duross. After being there for a certain time, Duross paid his lodgings and left, saying he was going into Scotland to work. The old widow (who was very deaf) and her daughter Hannah slept in a put-up bed down stairs, while the young men slept up stairs beside the lodger. Duross was not many days gone till the young woman was like to be suffocated by the smell of soot during the "wee" hours of the morning. When she got up, got the tinder box, and struck a light, she discovered to her horror a man's legs hanging down the chimney. She then alarmed her brothers and the lodger. They took their new chimney-sweep down, who was fast, having got astride of the "rannelbalk," which had impeded his progress downwards. They took him from his unenviable situation. It turned out to be Duross, their former lodger. Mucklehotton got a knife and was for killing his recent bedfellow. But the Philipsons, who were a quiet family, protected the prisoner from the other Irishman's violence. He was secured till daylight in the morning, when the constable was sought, and he was handcuffed, put in a cart, and conveyed to Hexham as black as a sweep, where he was examined by the Magistrates and committed for trial at the ensuing assizes, and was transported for a number of years. He had carried a very heavy ladder from an engine a good distance through a dene; and when asked who helped him to carry it, he replied "The Devil gave him a lift." When asked what his motive was, he replied "To see young Hannah." And indeed, it was thought by many that it was to take her life, as she had caught him robbing the

pockets of her brothers and the other lodger; which was the reason he had to quit. The young men and the lodger had each a watch, which might probably have attracted his attention.

It is rather amusing to state that I was a witness to various individuals cutting old sythes and grinding them to put across their chimneys, for fear there should be any more untimely visitors coming in the same manner.

Young Hannah was married to John Bright, and died at Peasmeadows in July, 1878, aged 82 years.

After the new road was completed we had quite a treat to see so many visitors come in their carriages. John Shield, the Allendale postman, ran a brake from Allenheads to Haydon Bridge till the Hexham and Allendale Railway was opened to Catton Road, which took place in 1869. The present John Shield runs a brake from Allenheads to Catton Road twice a day during summer and once a day during winter, to meet the trains with passengers, and to convey letters, parcels, &c.

On June 3rd, 1766, a man was married to his fourth wife at Allendale church. It is somewhat remarkable that this man had been fifteen times published in that church with different women and by the same clergyman.

March 13th, 1773.—As John Briddick, the Allendale postman, was going his usual journey to Hexham, being mounted on an animal of the galloway breed, he objected to the additional toll at the turnpike gate, saying "It was a shame to demand 1½d. for his pony, which was no bigger than a dog; and rather than submit to such an imposition he would take the pony upon his shoulders and walk through with it." This he did; affording the gate-keeper a good laugh for his 1½d.

On June 8th, 1829, died at Hexham Mr. Joseph Dawson, aged 101 years, a native of Allendale. Like many old people, he could not satisfactorily state his exact age, but it might be inferred pretty nearly, from facts which he often repeated, he was old enough to be engaged in ploughing during the rebellion of 1745; and was on one occasion driven, with his companions, from that employment by the appearance of a supposed troop of horse on Whitfield Fell, which, however, turned out to be a drove of ponies carrying bags of lead ore to the mills. Old Joe lived with the "twea lads," as he continued to call his sons, although far advanced in life, who made a tolerable livelihood by keeping a horse and cart; though poor in appearance and uncomfortable in their habits, as all men

become who dispense with the services of females, and abandon the decencies of life. Unaided by book learning, though in no wise deficient in natural capacity, his knowledge was limited, and his conversation uninteresting. His manners, like those of his family, were sufficiently heathenish, though not designed to be offensive to his neighbours. He had indeed two married daughters which he still called "the lasses" though now old women. When the old man died, it was resolved to bury him at the place that he came from. Having procured a coffin, the "lads" laid it—enclosing their father's remains—upon their own cart. The "lasses," having first lighted their pipes, took their seats upon it; and young Joe, (as the elder son had always been called till now, though blinder than the father at the end of his days), considering it was a long way to Allendale, made the nag quicken his pace.

Joe Dawson's name was long since connected with a story about the laying of a ghost, but the materials are too slender to warrant a sketch. Old Joe came originally from Allendale, and never laid aside his native dialect, though he lived in Hexham during the lifetime of nearly all the people inhabiting that place on his settling there. Joe Dawson's obituary found a place in the "Newcastle Chronicle" at the time of his death, which affords data in proof of his age.

There were several eccentric characters visited the dale at various periods. The first I remember was one Robert Robson, *alias* Bob the Cropper, who had been an extensive horse dealer, but had got reduced to beggary. He attended the pays for a number of years selling ballads, histories, and begging occasionally. He was a great favourite with many, as he helped different parties to choose a horse at the fairs, being considered a first-class judge.

There was another singular character went by the name of "Brush," who came to the pays from Tow Law, to sell nuts and oranges. He dressed himself in a woman's hat and cap, and when there was the greatest throng he got a long-shanked brush, and was very clever in marching through the throng with the brush balanced on the tip of his third finger.

Jack Coats was another well-known character for his ready wit. The young men used to be diverted with his witty sayings. He once went to Allendale to ask Mr. Crawlhall for work, when he got answer that Mr. Crawlhall had no work for him; and Jack told him that he (Mr. Crawlhall) would soon find him a job if he knew how little would serve him. Jack was fighting with another

man, when Mr. Crawlhall went up to them and said "That is bad work, Jack;" when he replied "Bad work is better than none." Another time he was at Allendale, when Mr. Crawlhall asked Jack to hold his horse till he went upon some business. After he again got on horseback and was riding away, Jack shouted, "Holloa, Maister! if anyone asks me what you gave me, what must I say?" when Mr. Crawlhall put his hand into his pocket, and gave him half-a-crown. In Jack's younger days he was a hired servant, and having once a long hard day with his two horses, when he went in at night his mistress brought him out a rickle of bones (as he expressed it) saying "Jack, pick those bones; the nearer the bone the sweeter the flesh." Jack went out and tethered the horses at the field head where his master had to come past, which he was not long in doing. He called Jack to account for tethering the horses where there was so little grass; when Jack replied, that "The mistress gave him a lot of bones to pick, saying, 'nearer the bone the sweeter the flesh,' and I thought that nearer the ground the sweeter the grass," when his master took him in and got him a good dinner. Jack's mistress also gave him a jug of sour beer, saying "it would do him good;" so he asked his master to have a drink, and urged him till he took a taste, when he threw both pot and beer on the back side of the fire, and got Jack some good beer.

Another strange character was Bonny Mary from Hexham, who often came into the dale begging. She was a great smoker, and snuffler as well. She used to travel with a cushion under her arm, to sit upon, and a black cutty pipe in her hand. After she got a smoke, she used to snuff the tobacco ashes. Many were afraid of her when the men were not at home; but the generality of people were very kind to her, as she was considered very harmless. The boys and girls used to follow her, shouting "Bonny Mary," when she threw stones, or anything she could get hold of, after them. She was a Clergyman's daughter, whom a gentleman had deceived, which caused her to be quite deranged in her mind.

Another eccentric character I must not omit, but of a different stamp from some of the former, who was well known throughout a wide district, and who was a very useful man indeed. I allude to Isaac Holden, who travelled with tea and coffee, and made himself very useful in his generation. Being a strict Wesleyan, there was a debt of £150 on the Wesleyan Chapel at Allendale, and Isaac set to work with all his might, and soon got the debt paid off. One hard winter, when a great many poor people were in great

distress, he got a clothing club established; and many poor people had reason to bless "Little Isaac" (as he often called himself) for a pair of good blankets to keep them warm during winter; it being the first thing of the kind in the district. The town being badly supplied with water, Isaac set to work again, and soon got them two wells, one of which has "I. H." (his initials) on the front, and is named "Isaac's well." The inhabitants of West Allen were badly off for a hearse, and they applied to him for assistance, when he got his portrait taken, and sold them at 1s. each, which may be seen in many houses at this day. This was what he called "selling himself to buy a hearse," which he soon accomplished. After his decease a subscription was made by the public, and a monument erected in Allendaletown church yard to his memory.

In 1834, lucifer matches made their first appearance in Allendale. An old basket man had them at 6d. per box, but shortly after they got reduced to 4½d. They were smaller boxes than at the present day. They had each a piece of sand-paper for to draw the match horizontally to cause it to ignite. Now at the present day we can get a dozen boxes for 4d. or 4½d.

In May, 1839, as a mason, named Robert Stephenson, was going to work one morning, he had occasion to go into the plantation below the Heads upon some business of his own, and discovered, lying concealed under a tree, two bags, which, upon examination, contained a large quantity of engine brasses; so he went direct and informed Mr. Crawhall, who sent for Ben, the foreman millwright, and asked him if they had lost any brass from the shop. He said, "he expected not; but he had not looked in the closet for a few days;" however, when he went to look they were all gone, both new and old; so Stephenson was employed to watch the brass in the plantation. It so happened there was a club feast at Allen heads, and while they were all making merry Stephenson arrived with intelligence that the thief had come for the concealed treasure, when a number of the agents and others mounted upon horseback with all speed, and galloped down the road after the rogue. The late William Curry, Esq., having the swiftest horse, overtook the thief three miles down the dale, with the bags of brass upon the back of an ass; and he (Mr. Curry) being a strong and valiant man, jumped off horseback and seized the thief by the neck, and a severe struggle ensued between them; but it seems the thief was too strong for Mr. Curry, for, after throwing him down and disfiguring his face, he got away, leaving Mr. Curry lying on the road with the

cuddy and brass in his possession. Shortly after the other horsemen arrived, when a number of them gave chase after the thief, but he escaped their vigilance. A part of them took the prize to Allenheads, and the ass was given to Joseph Chatt, the constable, for safe custody. What its former name was I cannot say, but he was christened "Brassy." The lads made him a bad life, although he sometimes gave them a severe bite; indeed, one of his tormentors was showing me a mark on one of his fingers, about three months ago, that "Brassy" had made, which he will carry to his grave with him.

January 7th, 1839.—This day is known as "Windy Monday," it was such a tempest of wind as never was witnessed by the oldest inhabitant. Chimney tops and slates were torn off the roofs of houses, and trees uprooted and carried to a great distance. All was uproar in the elements, and people were almost afraid to go outside the door; indeed, it was almost impossible to face the raging element. There has not been since such a tempest of wind in this district.

In December, 1841, Typhus Fever broke out in the upper part of the dale. The first cases proved fatal to three fine little boys, sons of J. Dargue and W. Rodham. The following month (January, 1842,) the pays being held, brought people together upon business, when the infection spread like a plague, which caused terror and dismay, as whole families were laid on a bed of sickness and languish. Many of the finest looking young people in the dale were swept away by this terrible contagion. Mr. Beaumont found his workmen with coffins, which were all done with pitch inside. The joiners often had to work on Sundays. I really believe some were buried before they were cold.

In 1845, William Crawhall, Esq., through declining health, resigned his situation as agent, when he was presented with a tureen by his workmen. He went to live at Stagshaw Close House, his own property; but he did not survive his removal long, and was buried at St. Peter's, Allendale, followed to his grave by all his old sorrowing workmen.

Thomas Sopwith, Esq., M.A., F.R.S., F.G.S., succeeded to the chief agency of all Mr. Beaumont's mines, both in Northumberland and Durham; and came to reside in Mr. Crawhall's old house, till there was a hall built on the site of the Craig House, where Mr. John Bowness and Mr. John Crawhall used to reside, when he removed to the mansion, where a clock was put in the tower for

the miners to see their working hours. The first reform he made was to shorten the hours of the washers, who had been in the habit of commencing work at 7 a.m. and working until 7 p.m.; but now it is from 7 to 6, and quite long enough for the poor boys, I think.

The parson and some of the dissenters disagreed about the schools. It seems the dissenters took their own children to their own Sunday schools, and the priest threatened to expel them from the national school, on week days, if they did not go on Sundays also. A deputation went to Mr. Sopwith, and their representations being laid before Mr. Beaumont, a meeting was called on the lent money day, when all the miners were met together. They were informed that if they were unanimous, Mr. Beaumont would build new schools, and they might contribute what they liked. A show of hands was demanded, when they were nearly all in favor of new schools, one for boys and another for girls. After which there were schools erected at Allenheads, Sinderhope, Allendaletown, and Carr Shield, which is a great privilege to the date. In the old schools the boys and girls were mixed together, but now they are separated, and have each good play grounds.

There were also built a number of offices, with a waiting room attached, called the miners' room, where a number of daily and weekly newspapers, periodicals, &c., for the miners to read free of charge. There is also a splendid library attached to this room, where the miners have the privilege of the loan of books at a cheap rate. The concerts, lectures, flower shows, &c., are all held in the miners' room.

The next request of the miners was to have £2 instead of 30s. per month subsistence money, which was granted; but they had to work not less than five 8-hour shifts per week. The miners in Weardale threatened to strike if they did not obtain the same privilege; but Mr. Sopwith sent Joseph Heslop over to New Houses, while the miners were congregated to seek their lent cash, who stood up and addressed them after this fashion:—Thomas Sopwith, Esq., F.R.S., chief agent of Mr. Beaumont's miners in Northumberland and Durham, has sent me to inform you that you will receive the same privileges as the men of Allendale; therefore you have no reason to strike on account of the lent money; which had the desired effect of appeasing them.

The 40s. subsistence money had not long been granted, till an eruption occurred between master and workmen of Allendale. It

seems Mr. Sopwith discovered that some of the miners, whose mines were poor, so that they could not make 10s. per week with hard workings, were not staying at work the five 8-hour shifts per week; so he gave them warning that if he discovered any more of them curtailing their stipulated time, he would set a watch upon them, and they might abide by the consequence. But it seems some of them did not heed this warning, and there were watches placed at all the outlets of the mines, which raised the ire of the workmen, and a meeting was called to discuss their grievances, when a number of delegates were chosen from amongst them, and the majority was for a strike, which took place in January, 1848, and lasted till April; when it terminated in the defeat of the men. There was a number of "false prophets" and agitators amongst them, which extended the strike longer than it would have been. Matthew Wilson, the Hexham poet, had a good time of it during the strike, as he was making a tour amongst the miners often, and espoused the cause of the men, which made his poems always eagerly bought. The first of them I saw, ran thus:

"When men and masters do fall out,

It is a pity, there is no doubt;

One thing I'll state in black and white,

They both do think that they are right."

Those who were the delegates were debarred from an offer of work under Mr. Beaumont. Some of them being men of intelligence, have succeeded very well in distant places. A large number of the miners emigrated to the United States of America, where some of them have been very prosperous; but very few are alive at the present day. I am not an advocate of strikes, seeing they generally do a large amount of harm, and cause a great deal of misery and distress amongst the working classes, besides impoverishing tradesmen, and nearly ruining the masters in many cases.

During the strike a number of Sir W. G. Armstrong's workmen from Elswick engine works were engaged in erecting hydraulic engines, laying down water pipes, and bratticing the shafts ready for caging, which, when they were completed, were a great relief to the miners. After all was got into working order, the workmen rode down the shafts to work at six o'clock in the morning, and up again at two in the afternoon, when the back shift men went down at the same time, where they remained till ten p.m. Although a great many of the men were very timid about riding at first, they very soon got hardened after finding so much ease. Myself being one of the first who had the driving of the first engine that was

erected at Allenheads, I must say they are the neatest and cleverest engines I have seen anywhere, and quite easy of control; although not so quick as steam, they are much more steady. I have drawn a laden tub up a shaft 50 fathoms in one minute; or they can be set to steal a tub the same distance as slow as the brakesman chooses. These engines also pump the water out of the mines. The water-wheel was taken out at the crushing mill at the washing floors, and a hydraulic engine put in its place with all the latest improvements in machinery.

There is also a long range of new shops for joiners, blacksmiths, sharpeners, and fitters, with engines for driving various sorts of machinery, with sawmill, and an hydraulic lift for hoisting the heavy timber. And, indeed, everything has a very neat appearance about those mines.

Wherever there was any waste land on the hill sides or about the mines, it has been planted with trees a good number of years ago, which have got to a good size, and the place is quite transformed to a beautiful woodland district.

The lead ore formerly was all hauled out of the mines by horses and whinies, or what are commonly called "gins" in the pit districts, till somewhere about 1823, when there were three water-wheels and machinery erected for hauling to the surface, and at a later period another of these engines was erected underground; they were worked by means of rack and pinion, and were called "flays." There were four of these engines at Allenheads, but the hydraulic ones have superseded them. There are also four water-wheels always working underground for pumping the water out of the mines, which empties itself into the Allen, about three-quarters of a mile down the dale, by means of a level.

In September, 1855, was commenced the stupendous undertaking of driving a level 7 feet high between Allendaletown and Allenheads, a distance of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It is named "The Blackett Level," and it is opened to Sipton, a distance of about 4 miles.

In March, 1856, a serious catastrophe occurred at these mines. Two youths, about 17 years of age, one a son of Jacob Sanderson, and the other a son of Mrs. Short, were working in the mines, and their parents thinking them longer than their usual time, some of their friends went to the outlets of the mines, when they discovered to their horror a thick smoke issuing from all the openings to the mines, so that no one could penetrate into them. The poor boys were engulfed in the bowels of the earth from

Monday until Wednesday, when their dead bodies were got to the surface, which caused a great sensation in the district. It was also nearly fatal to some of the explorers, as they were about suffocated with the fumes of burning wood. It is supposed some one had left a piece of candle burning where timber was put in to uphold the mine, and when it had fallen down, had set fire to the dry rotten wood, and suffocated the poor boys. If it had happened in the fore part of the day instead of evening, the case would probably have been more serious. It so happened these two youths were the only ones that were in the mine. At the time great preparations were made to have a tea party and ball in the miners' room on the occasion of Mr. Beaumont's marriage with Lady Margaret, daughter of the Marquis of Clanricarde, which took place about this time; but instead of a rejoicing it was turned into a house of mourning.

In 1871 Mr. Sopwith resigned his situation as agent for Mr. Beaumont's mines, and went to reside in London. During his agency at those mines, he had a number of agents under his control whom I must not omit to mention. Mr. William Curry being the second agent during Mr. Crawhall's time, still occupied the same place under Mr. Sopwith, and Mr. John Curry was appointed to assist him as the two agents for the mines; Mr. T. J. Bewick was engineer; Mr. Joseph Coats, land agent; Mr. John Ridley, surveyor; and Mr. Johnson, smelting mill agent. Mr. William Curry died a good number of years ago; and after Mr. Sopwith left Mr. John Curry was appointed as chief agent for the mines, which place he retained till his death, which took place a few years ago. At that time (1871) the mining agents were Mr. John Curry (son of the late John Curry) and Mr. John Ashman: these gentlemen are both dead. Mr. Bewick removed to Haydon Bridge, where he commenced the Honey Crook lead mine, and has a large number of workmen employed. It has turned out a very prosperous undertaking, he having obtained a large quantity of lead ore, and which is very likely to last.

January, 1879: *Churches and Chapels*.—There are at the present time 5 Episcopal and 23 Dissenting places of worship. The Parochial Church at Allendaletown was rebuilt about 5 years ago, and is a neat stone structure. The Rev. Dr. Mason is the incumbent curate. St. Peter's Chapel of Ease and the chapel at Allenheads, where the Rev. C. O'Donnell has officiated about 27 years, is vacant, that gentleman having been promoted to the living of Thockrington,

but Dr. Mason preaches occasionally at St. Peter's. The Chapel of Ease at Nine Banks and Allen High Chapel at Carr Shield, has the Rev. Jonathan Scurr as curate, who officiates at both these places. The Society of Friends have a chapel at Burnfoot, near Allendale-town. The Wesleyans have chapels at the following places, viz.:—Allendaletown, which was rebuilt last year; one at Hesley Well, Limestone Brae, Allenheads, Shield Ridge, High House, Keenly, Catton, Fry Hill, Mowhope, and Tedham. The chapel at Allendaletown is duly licensed for the solemnization of marriages. The Primitive Methodists have the same number of chapels as the Wesleyans, which are situated near the same places; and I am glad to say they are remarkably well attended.

Mr. George Dickenson, Dene House, is overseer of the poor and registrar of births, deaths, and marriages, for Allendale parish, while Mr. William Moore, Allendaletown, is assistant overseer.

There were toll bars at the following places, viz.:—Stublick Syke, Catton, Allendaletown, Sinderhope, Sparty Lea, and Allenheads, which were removed a number of years ago; and the expense of keeping the roads in repair is now laid on the parish.

There are two traction engines travelling during the summer season between Allen smelt mill and the mines, carrying material for the mines and conveying the lead ore to the mills.

There is a brewery at Allendale Town, which was erected about 1828; the firm is Wilson, Lee, & Co. Mr. John Walton is the manager.

Mr. Fairbairn is post-master at Allendaletown; and Mr. Geo. Coats, post-master at Allenheads.

In travelling up to Allenheads, the principal attractions are the neat and beautiful monuments erected over the shafts at different parts in the range of the Blackett Level, where there are hydraulic engines for hauling the work from the Level. They are built of timber, and extend to above the pulley wheels; and painted a light blue colour; they may be seen a good distance, and have an imposing appearance. There is no signal bell attached to those engines, but indicators in front of the enginemens, where there is a brass pointer runs up, so that it shows every fathom that the cage travels. There are four of those monuments, viz.: one at the Holmes, one at Sipton, one at Brecon Hill, and one at Allenheads.

On the 4th of January, 1879, the Author paid a visit to Allenheads, and was sorry to see the mines and smelt mills all laid idle. Numbers of the miners told me that a portion of them

had been discharged on the 19th June, last year. Nearly twenty years ago, when a number of the miners were discharged, Mr. Attwood & Co. employed a great number of men at the iron stone works in Rookhope and Weardale, where they obtained good wages; but at the present time work is scarce, and wages very low all over the country, which is causing a great amount of distress; and many families, both in Allendale and Weardale, cannot get the necessaries of life. Mr. Beaumont's workmen are all laid idle in both those places; and it seems very hard, when men are able and willing to work, so many of them should have to go without food.

At the present time the distress of those hardy miners is increasing, especially in Weardale, where the population is much larger than in Allendale.

The late Robert Hewitson has frequently related a circumstance to me which occurred during the last century. There were two very bad corn harvests in succession, and the corn was quite unsound and not fit for human food; indeed, according to my information, it would not adhere together after being baked, and the smell of it was very disagreeable.

Sir William Blackett, who was the proprietor of those mines at that time, being at Newcastle, got information that his workmen were suffering from want of food; and he, being a very kind-hearted gentleman, mounted upon horse back and rode direct to Allenheads, where he proved his information to be correct. He got them a large quantity of Danzic rye, which was retailed to them at reasonable prices, and which was carried to Nenthead, Alston, and other places at a distance. This was called the "Master's Corn."

The following notice appeared in the *Heatham Courant*, on the 18th January, 1879:—

DEATH OF T. SOPWITH, Esq., M.A., F.R.S., F.G.S.

IT is with feelings of unfeigned regret that we have to record in our obituary notice to-day, the death of Thos. Sopwith, Esq., M.A., F.R.S., F.G.S., which mournful event took place on Thursday last, at his town residence, No. 103, Victoria Street, Westminster. Mr. Sopwith, as is well-known to most of our readers, was for several years one of the proprietors of this journal, and was a frequent and valuable contributor to its columns, his various articles always being read with pleasure and profit, and many of them being "quoted" in both periodicals and newspapers of far greater pretensions to literary merit than our humble selves. His "Notes on Spain" were more than ordinarily interesting, and his description therein of a Spanish bull fight, to which he was an eye witness, was considered to be worthy of reproduction by the *Times* itself. Some few years ago, Mr. Sopwith retired from the proprietorship of the *Courant*,

but up to the very last he took a warm interest in its welfare, and by his lamented decease we feel that personally we have lost a dear and most valued friend. The deceased gentleman was born in Newcastle in 1803, so that he had reached the tolerably advanced age of 76 years. He was first known as a director of the large cabinet and upholstery manufactory that still bears his name, where he gave early proof of the great practical capacity of which he was possessed by the excellence of the articles produced, the new designs of which he was himself the author, and by attention to the construction of the workshops and residences of the workmen. During his connection with this business he invented a very curiously constructed and useful piece of mechanical furniture, called the *Monocleid*, consisting of a complete writing desk with drawers and compartments for every sort of document, which could be closed in a moment, without waiting to put up any papers strewn upon the desk. A single spring enclosed every thing, and locked at the same time every drawer. It was so contrived that a row of keys hung within it, and they must everyone be there or the machinery immediately gave notice of the omission. It was in other fields, however, that Mr. Sopwith was destined to achieve distinction. The scientific bend of his mind evinced itself in the study which he devoted to mining and railway engineering; and the skill which he attained in these branches was practically brought to bear in several extensive undertakings, both in this country and on the Continent. As one of the sister sciences, he also paid much attention to geology, and here, too, his reputation was great. He invented and constructed a number of large geological models of mining districts, which have places in the Government Museum of Practical Geology in London, as well as in the museums of Oxford and Cambridge; and on the 26th of January, 1842, he was awarded the Telford silver medal for a paper on this subject by the Institution of Civil Engineers, of which he was a member. About the same time, he published an able book on the Mining and Geological Phenomena of Northumberland and Durham, the work giving ample evidence of the complete knowledge he had of the lead and other mining fields of those two great mineral counties. In 1838, Mr. Sopwith was appointed Commissioner for the Crown under the Dean Forest Mining Act, and in the same year he took an active part in the proceedings of the British Association, which then for the first time, met in his native town, Newcastle. By representations which on that occasion he made to the Council, he was instrumental in causing the formation of the present Mining Records Office, from which the most useful results have flowed. In the year 1845, Mr. Sopwith received a mark of high confidence and esteem, in his appointment, as the successor of Mr. Crawhall, to the management of Mr. Wentworth B. Beaumont's vast mining property in Allendale. He now resided at Allenheds; and, while zealously applying himself to the requirements of his new vocation, he yet found considerable time to devote to those scientific pursuits to which he was so ardently attached. On the occasion of the second visit of the British Association to Newcastle, under the presidency of his fellow-townsmen, Sir W. G. Armstrong, in 1863, he was again prominently to the front in promoting the success of that memorable meeting; and in conjunction with Mr. T. Richardson, M.A., F.R.S.E., he contributed an exhaustive paper on the "Local Manufacture of Lead, Copper, Zinc, Antimony, &c.," the subject being illustrated by a section of the strata from the fell top limestone to the lowest strata in the lead mines at Allenheds. The deceased gentleman was also possessed of finely cultivated literary tastes; and apart from the scientific papers and communications which he contributed to learned societies, his pen was brought to bear upon other topics of a more

miscellaneous character. He wrote and had printed a very interesting and illustrated volume entitled "Notes in Egypt," made during a tour taken in company with the late Mr. Robert Stephenson and Mr. Lee, the Royal Academician. This volume is very remarkable for the liberality of the sentiments enunciated by the author, and the practical power of observation it shows him to have possessed. He looks at every nation with the eye of a moralist, and at every town from the point of sight of a geologist and engineer. There is a fine cosmopolitan spirit running through every page. On the occurrence of the lamentable accident at Hartley Colliery on the 16th of January, 1863—the anniversary of which has witnessed his death—Mr. Sopwith rendered valuable assistance in directing the engineering operations connected with clearing the ill-fated mine; and he subsequently contributed to one of the periodicals of the day—we believe the *Cornhill Magazine*—a well-written article on the leading features of that catastrophe, which aroused so fully the interest and sympathy of the nation. His position as agent and manager to Mr. Beaumont, Mr. Sopwith relinquished in 1871, after having completed half a century of active work in his profession. The humanity and liberality of his employer had enabled him to carry out arrangements for the improvement of the miners as well as the property, which certainly did him as great credit as his scientific attainments and engineering successes. Since this period the deceased gentleman has lived in London in comparative retirement, and now that he is gone his name will be long cherished as one of the not few scientific sons of eminence to whom Newcastle has given birth.



There are employed at Allenheads 18 pickmen, and a few labourers; at Holmes Linn, about 9 men; and at Grove Rake, in Rookhope, about 27 men, and part of these carry their wallets from Allenheads. There are also about 9 men employed in West Allen, that once prosperous district.

There was a volunteer rifle corps established in October, 1860, under the superintendence of Serjeant Fowler, who reside at Allenheads, and also drills the Haydon Bridge corps; but a great many of the men have left the district.

There are at present four old men living near to Allenheads, whose united ages amount to 311 years. They have wrought for the Messrs. Beaumont all their lives.

I perceive they are commencing to build a curate's house, nearly opposite St. Peter's Church. The name of the present curate is the Rev. Mr. Lister. The miners' surgeon is Dr. Cropp, who resides at "Elia House."

There is a person who writes the Allendale notes in the *Heclam Courant*, whose signature is "Hazel Dene": and very clever he or she is. I think, whoever it is, they need not be ashamed of their real signature, as the notes are much admired.

As I have stated beforehand, a good many miners left Allenheads after the strike. A portion of them I have frequently seen in my travels, who are doing very well as agents, clerks, grocers, drapers, &c. I was very glad to read in the *Newcastle Chronicle*, of one of them being promoted to the high position of town councillor only very recently; and another a curate, with "M.A." attached to his signature.

I paid a visit to the Town on the 12th, and was quite delighted to see so many fine buildings since I last visited Allendaletown. There is the new church, a neat stone structure; the new Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist chapels; also the new schools, and savings' bank; all noble buildings, which have been erected since I last visited the place.



THE PRESENT STATE OF ALLENDALE.



1850
 ON October 7th, I paid a visit to Allenheads, and I am sorry to state that that once happy and prosperous dale is filled with misery and poverty; although the same kind and warm hearts reign within their breasts. Some of them have had very little work for the last two years; and some of those that have been employed have made starvation wages. I fell in company with an old acquaintance, who told me he had only received £4 this last four months; and that man has a family to support.

I was informed by a respectable person, that a partnership of four men had only received £7 each for the last six months. The agents are making some of the small farmers sell part of their stock to pay their rents. Some are fleeing away to the coal mines or any place where they can obtain employment.

There are, at the present time, in the Parish of Allendale, from 107 to 110 uninhabited houses.

The rateable value for Allendale Parish at the present time, is £21772 10s.

I passed by the smelt mills, and had a look into the yard, where I saw many hundred tons of ore and lead lying. I was informed that the workmen had all got their notice, but, at the same time, it was only to dismiss eighteen of the men.

I perceive there is a very large quantity of lead ore at the washing floors at Allenheads. The bingsteads are all full, and a great quantity is laid upon the places were the picked stones formerly lay, and many carts are employed leading it to the mills. I was wondering what had become of the traction engines; but I suppose they have gone to sleep for a season.



As I am an old man, I have told you some old fashion stories in an old fashioned style. If I have written any thing offensive to any one, it was not my intention to do so; but beg to subscribe myself,

Your humble Servant,

BEN. IRWIN.

Haydon Bridge,
October, 1880.

