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**TO THE POOR MINER
AND TO EVERY NOBLEMAN, GENTLEMAN, AND TRADESMAN IN
THE KINGDOM
WHO FEELS INTERESTED IN A MINER'S FATE.**

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Barker, Esq. Healaugh.

Mr. Maltby of London having said, and still continuing imperiously to say, that "Lead shall not rise", meaning thereby to let the Lead Interest of this great Kingdom be informed, that his Wealth, Consequence, and Power, are more than equal to cope with, and dictate to this hitherto noble and immense Interest; and as it is most evident, "that when Mr. Maltby says "Lead shall not rise", he means it to be understood, that his mind is made up that "Lead shall fall", I feel it is my duty (humble and comparatively poor as I am,) to stand forth, not only for my own Interests, but for the very Salvation of Hundreds, who have been brought up under me during this last thirty Years in the Mines; and to advocate their cause with all the little Ability I am endowed with.

That the Miner may know the immense weight of the Rock which is impending over his Head, ready (if Mr. Maltby can effect his fatal Purpose,) to fall down, and crush him to Death; a more fatal Rock, in my Mind than any he has bravely looked upon in the Mine; it is proper he should be informed who Mr. Maltby is.

He is the managing Partner in the great commercial House of Walkers, Maltby, and Co. Ltd. London, Lead Merchants. This Firm are moreover Manufactureres of Lead in most of its different Shapes, and have for that purpose a very extensive Manufactory at Newcastle-on-Tyne, another at Chester, a third at Derby, a fourth at Islington, and a fifth at Southwark.

Messrs. Walkers are Gentlemen largely concerned in the Iron Trade at Rotherham; they possess great Wealth, and are likewise Bankers in that Town.

Messrs. Walkers and Maltby are also concerned in the great and powerful Banking-house of Everett, "Walker, and Co. in London, in which Banking-house I am told Mr. Maltby takes a leading part. Mr. Everett was, and I believe is, Receiver of the Taxes for the County of Middlesex, which adds very considerably to the Capital and Power of the Bank.

Such being the strength and resources of this Leviathian Concern, directed by one Head, governed by one Mind, that Mind firm in its purpose, and confident in its resolves, it has for a long time past been totally impossible for any Man, or perhaps

any set of men, to interfere (without being ruined) in the Lead Trade, which has been therefore in [17] the Iron Hands of Mr. Maltby, for alas! several years.

Mr. Arthur Emerson, a Merchant of respectability in London, has however within these two or three last years been attending to the Lead Trade, and wisely foreseeing the probability of an advance taking place in the price of Lead has seized, so far as Fortune has enabled him, the lucky moment to purchase Lead; which has, therefore as I conceive by his individual foresight alone, been raised from the low and ruinous price of £15 to £26 or £28 per Ton.

That “There is a Tide in the affairs of men which taken at the Flood leads to a Fortune,” and that “Quem deus vult perdere prius Dementat”. Whom God intends to punish, he first delivers of their good Sense, is I trust, visible here, for while Mr. Emerson has been buying every Pig of Lead as it was offered to him, Mr. Maltby has been proudly advancing his dictum, that “Lead shall not rise”, in the face of a gradual Advance in the Price of Lead, from £15, or I believe somewhat below that Price.

I do not fear Mr. Maltby’s Prophecy (fortified by all his immense Wealth and Power,) will be fulfilled for some Months to come, inasmuch as the Demand is more than equal to the Quantity on hand; but it is most evidently needful that some powerful Assistance should be given to Mr. Emmerson, to enable him cope with Mr. Maltby in the Summer, when more Lead may be brought to market, and when many Gentlemen who now hold Lead in the hope of obtaining £30 per Ton for it, may be satisfied with having obtained that Price, and dreading Mr. Maltby’s Malediction, may hurry more Lead to Market (if that should prove to be possible, which however I hope will not be possible) than Mr. Emerson and his Friends can in prudence purchase, or the immediate consumption require.

Altho’ the East India Company have in their goodness (as I am told) given £27 per Ton for a very considerable quantity of Lead, and altho’ Mr. Maltby has a considerable Share in the Contract, yet he proudly holds that he will supply every Plumber in the Kingdom at £25 per Ton. It may not at first sight appear, how these dicta of Mr. Maltby operate, but they have a most essentially fatal Effect upon the market. Let it be supposed that Plumbers knowing the East India Co. have bought 1500 Tons of Lead at £27. and £27:5s, they naturally would feel inclined to give more for a small quantity; and the Idea that Lead would be higher would induce men to purchase more freely, than they would do when they thought the price would fall, all the Plumbers in England may without any great Stretch of Imagination be presumed upon an Average to add 5 Tons to their Stock. Suppose there are 2000 Plumbers in the Kingdom; that additional demand amounts at once to Ten Thousand Tons of Lead, and throws in an additional Capital to the Trade of £300,000; but When they are told by Mr. Maltby not to buy, “that the Price of Lead [18] shall not rise”, that “he will supply every Plumber in the Kingdom at £25,” and when the Plumbers

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know, by alas! fatal Experience, that his immense Wealth, Consequence, and Power, have uniformly enabled him to substantiate his Prophecies, the consequence is, that the Plumbers buy as sparingly as possible, and thus instead of adding £300,000. to Capital of the Trade, rather decrease the present tangible Capital by being most dilatory and cautious in purchasing.

I therefore am induced to request every Nobleman, Gentleman, and Tradesman, interested in the welfare of the Trade to subscribe to a Fund to be dedicated to the purchase of a handsome piece of Plate, to be (when the Subscription shall be made up) presented to Mr. Arthur Emerson by a Committee to be formed in London; in the first place to shew the gratitude of the Miners, and others, interested in, and benefited by his exertions; and in the next place to fortify his mind, and increase his exertions, if that be possible, to rescue the Trade from the Leaden Weight it has so long groaned under.

I therefore call upon every Miner to meet me at certain Places mentioned below, on the Day and Hour appointed, When I will myself attend (with such Gentlemen as may do me the honour of attending) to receive Subscriptions, which shall be lodged with such Banks in Richmond and other Towns, as will do me the honour of receiving the Money and placing it to "Account of the Miners' Fund," till the Committee in London shall direct its Application. And as I anticipate that every Miner who can advance One Penny, or has a Shoe to walk upon, will meet me, I beg him to bring a slip of paper, stating his Name and Place of abode and the Amount of the sum he subscribed (which need not in any case of a working man be more than 2d.6d. (although one Farthing when he can afford no more will be equally acceptable) that his Name may eventually be entered in a Book with the amount of the Sum he has subscribed put opposite, and handed down to Posterity, to his Children's Children, to perpetuate his Exertions on this momentous occasion.

I shall attend, at Reeth	on Monday, January 26
at Richmond	on Tuesday, January 27 at Yarker's
at Middleton in Teesdale	on Wednesday, Jan. 28.) at the
at Stanhope in Weardale	on Thursday, Jan. 29) Principal
at Alston	on Friday, Jan. 30) Inns.
at Hexham	on Saturday, Jan. 31)
at Newcastle	on Monday, Feb. 2. at Forster's
at Stockton	on Tuesday, Feb. 3. at the Red Lion
at Pateley Bridge	on Monday; Feb. 9.
And in London	on Tuesday, Feb.17 at the London Tavern.

At 1 o'Clock precisely each day.

Ye, whom Providence has blest with Affluence, who sleep on Beds of Down, and revel on the Wings of Pleasure, permit me to inform you, of the difference between your Fate, and that of a poor Miner, and, Oh! let me beseech you, to come forward on this Occasion, to rescue him, and his hapless Family, from Starvation and Death, for there is no other alternative, if Mr. Maltby's Prophecy should, alas! be verified.

The Almighty, with an all-seeing Eye, has for good purposes placed Mines in mountainous Countries, barren, and bleak in summer, and stormy and wet in Winter. The hardy Miner has therefore of necessity to climb Precipices and encounter Dangers, of which those who live in better Climes have barely an Idea; he has to go to, and return from his daily labour, sometimes during several weeks together, without a dry Thread upon his Back; descends into the Mine, and labours with Bravery, Coolness, and Judgement, in places which would appal many brave men, and has done all this for several years past, for 8s. to 12s. per Week, frequently for much less! Alas! for 2s 6d to 3s per week.

Mr. Morrit of Rokeby when advocating as he thought rightly, but in my opinion erroneously* the Cause of the Mining Districts, with a Sensibility that do Honour to his Feelings, stated in Parliament with Tenas that they were one of the most quiet, peaceable, description of Men in this Kingdom.

Many families sleep on beds of straw or Chaff, some even to 5 to 7 in one Bed, the 3 oldest Children at the foot, the Father and Mother and the two Infants at the head of the Bed.

During these later years, when the Price of Lead has been so low, and the Price of Provisions so high** Families have lived on Oatmeal and Water for Weeks together,*** in some instances that Water not even boiled, the Parties being unable to procure Fuel to boil a Pot, and frequently their scanty and miserable Meal not seasoned by even a little Salt, unless indeed by the Salt of their own Tears and those of their helpless Innocents:- can Human Nature endure more? And yet, I have seen all this endured with Patience, and Resignation, and honest Industry, in the Hope of "better Times".

And are these Men now to be told, after having been steeped to the very lips in Misery, when the Sun of Prosperity by the Advance in the Price of Lead, is just glimmering through the Mists which have been supposed to arise from War and Famine; while they were cheering themselves and Families with the pleasing Hope of being at last able to obtain a little Animal Food: are these Men now to be told, I say, that a Gentleman raised to great Property (acquired in the Lead Trade by the very Toil and labour of these Men in procuring the Article, by which he has made his Fortune, and who should rather have endeavoured to have assisted than depressed them) is determined to reduce the Price of Lead, [20] proudly stalking upon the

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Royal Exchange of London, and imperatively vociferating “Lead shall not rise” and, like Him that sat upon the Red Horse, producing Desolation and Woe.

Do we live in England? can it be possible that one Monopolizing Capitalist can thus have the Lives of Hundreds in his Grasp? Our most gracious Sovereign and Prince cannot (if they could ever wish it) hurt one hair upon the heads of one of their meanest Subjects, and is it to be enforced that any other Man in this great Kingdom shall exceed the Powers of our Sovereign?

We glory in our Constitution! we feel proud of the name of Britons! we encourage ourselves and Friends, with the Idea, that no man can be put to death in England, but with the approval of twelve of his Peers summoned upon his Jury, assisted by an able, upright, and independent Judge, and their Verdict at last subject to the gracious Consideration of our Sovereign!!! But how do all these Blessings of which we are so proud, fade before us, when we see it has been, and may again (though I trust in God not) be in the Power of one immense Capitalist to starve us perhaps even unto Death?

Can it be needful for me to say more?

Ought I to fear Censure for thus advocating the Poor Miner’s Cause?

May I hope for the Assistance of all Humane Minds?

FREDERICK HALL

Reeth in Yorkshire Jan. 9. 1818.

NOTE – It has been wisely ordered that no Monopoly should be permitted to take place in regard to provisions, that the poor might be secured from being imposed upon but what is the Monopoly of anyone article of Food to a Monopoly which goes to prevent a Van having any Food at all?

This Monopoly of Mr. Maltby proceeds altogether upon principles different from what our forefathers foresaw, and endeavoured to prevent; their fear was of a Monopoly, to advance the price of an article, in which event if evil, to the consumer by the increased price was occasioned good was obtained. by the producer in the advance of price which he received for the cultivation of the Article: but with Mr. Maltby only one side can receive good, for the Monopoly is to prevent the rise in price to the producer. And when it is considered how little benefit the Consumer of Lead receives in any case, even that objection [21] which might be made in his favour falls almost to the ground also.

Let any man enquire how many Pounds of White Lead will serve to paint his House, and then add the increase upon White Lead from the Price it is now, and would be, if Lead was £60. per Ton, and he will readily satisfy himself of this; let him reflect also,

how much better he can afford such a trifling advance, which is moreover at his own Option, than the poor Miner can afford every Privation in Life. Let him also consider how much better it would be that the benevolent wish of our most gracious King, “that every poor man in the Kingdom might have a Joint and a Pudding on Sunday”, should in this case be carried into effect, than that the poor Miner should be again reduced to live for Days or Weeks together on Oatmeal and cold Water.

The only Benefit Mr. Maltby can receive, is to be able to carry on his Trade with a smaller Capital, producing him somewhat less risk upon what however produces him an enormous Profit, (I mean the White Lead Trade) and enables him the better to keep almost the whole Trade in his own Hands.

It may perhaps be supposed by many, that Mr. Maltby would not say “Lead shall not rise”, without having sufficient ground for it, such as that if Lead rose to above £15, so much could be dug out of the Bowels of the Earth as would overset the Market, and run the Price down to perhaps £5. or £10. per Ton, by which more Mischief might be created than any good can be produced by having the Price advanced.

I (who nay at least be presumed to be tolerably well informed on this Subject) see no cause why Lead should not advance to £60, save the overwhelming Influence of Mr. Maltby, and the strange Fatuity and Discordance which has hitherto paralyzed the Interests of the Owners of Lead Mines.

Let us however have a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, and we shall see the Price of Lead £60., and it will be time enough to find out our Error in having it at that Price, when it shall be found it cannot be supported “One and All” is the motto of the Cornish Miners, let “One and All” be the motto of every Miner in the Kingdom and I prophesy we have only to use a little Exertion, and then to leave the price of Lead to find its own Level, which it has never yet done.

When His Majesty’s Government saw it proper to take off the duty upon the export of Lead two years ago, Mr. Morrison stated that the average at which Col. Beaumont’s Lead was raised, exceeded £22. per Ton, this Mr. Maltby believe knows, and knows also, that Col. Beaumont’s Mines are supposed to be the most productive in the Kingdom.

I have for some time told the Miners, that till Lead rose above £30. [22] they could expect little or no advance in their wages, for though the Mines will produce a profit at a price below £30. yet a vast debt is to be removed from off almost all Mines before any real Profit can arise to the adventurer, as may naturally be supposed when Lead has been so low as £15.

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When I consider that His Majesty's Ministers have seen it necessary to take off the duty upon Lead, and that the public distress cannot be unknown to Mr. Maltby, I do confess I am astonished at his determination that "Lead shall not rise".

*I say erroneously, because whatever Burthens are laid upon the Mine Adventurer must eventually fall on the Wages of the Miner.

**Provisions are at present barely within the Compass of the Miner, and from all appearance are as likely to be as high in Mining Districts this Season as they have been. Many Miners are yet unable to procure more than Bread and a small quantity of Cheese: many Tradesmen are nearly if not quite ruined, and so little can be bought by the Miners save Bread and Cheese, that Trade may be said to be almost at a stand.

***Oatmeal and Water forms what in Scotland is called "Crowdy" or "Hasty Pudding" a healthy and good Heal, when seasoned with Butter, Bacon, Milk, or Beer, etc. but is in truth a sad Potage when nothing but cold Water can be added to it.