INTRODUCTION TO PROPOSED HANDBOOK
TO MINES OF THE SHELVE AND MINSTERLEY DISTRICT, SHROPSHIRE.

By Mr. Jasper More, M.P.

In all neighbourhoods, especially where there are mines, there are old people whose memories are stored with information which may serve as a guide to miners. If they will only make up their minds to come down from the hills, it will be difficult to induce old inhabitants to do so.

At a meeting of a reading club, established at Shelve School, I was asked to give a lecture, and on January 15, 1898, I prepared a subject for discussion: the policy of collecting facts as to the past history of the mines of Shelve and adjoining districts. The meeting lasted for two hours, during which time the audience was well informed.

I stated how Sir Rodrick Murchison came to the neighbourhood in the time of my uncle, Robert Rodrick More, when he made Cashley his headquarters for seven years, and wrote the history of the geology of Shelve, and of the adjoining counties to Shropshire, and published in the first place the results of his life, in order to tell his experience of the district 10 years before, when he composed his work "Siluria"; I think nearly 60 years ago.

In this note I state his case that in the term the Shelve or Minsterley district would be known as the richest for lead in England except Altenhame in Northumberland, an opinion confirmed, without this exception, by Captain Oldfield, Captain of Hanisleshe, at the Shelve meeting, who said that management, the brook system, and high royalties had injured the mines. I think that it is no fear of his being paid now, while the mine is in the hands of the rifle corps. Sir John Murchison. The aid of the manager of the late Altenhame Lead, in Northumberland, is also judicious in addition to the Duke of Cleveland and others did in Durham, and as to royalty, rent, a high price of ore and wheat prevented what otherwise would be a high price. In fact, the Banera is reenacting, as many functions are reasonable in the district, and all had promised their land if a lead railway was again offered. If it has been well, as the survey of the land has been decided.

This meeting was fortunately attended at a meeting at Shrewsbury, when it was proposed by the Chairman of the Cheltenham Lead Club, to put the present Shelve Lead line into a through line to Shropshire Heath, which was then declined, but now is owned by the owner of the Snaulby Heath. It is the district only with lead, for it is now required for account of blende, which makes spelter or spelter, a new industrial product. Formerly the charge of making a spelter was worth £20 a ton, or more. Two or three tons of blende make one of spelter, but we sold blende at 50 cents a ton, last year. The greatest manufacturers are in Belgium, who require large consignments, and on their behalf proposals have been made to take over any mine in the work which produces blende, and which mine which appeared to be in a state of being sold.

It would have been at a higher price than the old mine, but the Blinde Mine in Australia, where lead was found, on the surface, and was worked chiefly for the silver, the refuse lead of an inferior quality being sent to England as ballast, one of the hund roses to miners of free trade. In the problem of the confluence of the Blinde Mine the chance of a great recovery in England lead mines, Silver, now bismuth, has received its death blow, except from propositions to put some of the mines of business into the hands of Easterners, is not likely to recover, and this mine has to be worked at an increasing depth in a district far removed from London. Very few of the mines, Lea in is increased for electrical appliances.

The more it has suffered, as Captain Oldfield stated, from bad management and traffic in shares, high royalty, which he gave as a third cause, does not exist. I have spoken of the advisability of letting the district be worked over more in the future, if the mines are known to be in a state of being sold, or the firm is continued at Westminster. In Durham, the sloping scale in the Duke of Cleveland's mine began at 1,150 feet on a slope which the nearest incline of each mine, these lines were under the advice of his representative, Mr. William Smith, well known in parts of Shropshire as one of the first agricultural societies, as he is recognized in the north as one of the best mining authorities. The Royal Commission on mining royalties adumbrated disposed of what seemed to be the proposition of myself and others, after hearing the evidence of Mr. Peter Watson, whose management of Shropshire mines is criticized, as those who undertake the district are not likely to do it.

Mr. Oldfield would grant a good lecturer on practical mining to this district, as suggested by Mr. Watson, and all such government representatives. As it was calculated that the amount of the Roman Graves spent fully £100,000 in Shrewsbury, this district may have a chance of the County Council. When Sir Rodrick Murchison first came into Shropshire more than 50 years ago, this district, without the Roman Graves, which paid lately £2,000,000 in dividends on the United Kingdom's lead of the United Kingdom.

Two private individuals worked the gift, which is now being reopened. The history of much mining handbook to miners and visitors is what is proposed to have been written, and is already asked for. The object of publishing these remains is to enable those who have the information to send it to Mr. Higgins, of Shelve, Minsterley. A treatise on ore deposits by Mr. Philip, F.R.S., Illustrates the district. Second edition, and a further professor of mining and adapting to Durham College of Science, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Mr. Salmon was an account of the district in the journal of the French Society of Arts.

A mistake was made in removing engines at Tunkersills and the Rock Mines, the former having had £10,000 in shares, given by Mr. Shaw, whose son was M.P. for Stafford in the last Parliament. The latter was worked by a British company, whilst Bradwell, hedgerow, is now worked by Mr. Harwood, who formerly managed the collieries of the Earl of Dudley. The mines have been protected on my side of the district, the engines are able to be set to work without the necessity of having to provide fresh machinery. The mistake of consulting a note of competition between the two districts, and the Vale Products of the same price, at a meeting summoned to hear what anyone had to say about light railways after the passing of the Act, caused some misunderstanding, while there was no possibility of competition, unless it was intended to try to rate the one valley for the preliminary expenses of the other, without the consent before hand of the district council, which was attempted, after a solicitor's bill had been incurred by the casting vote of the clerical chairman, but was found impossible, the provision of the Light Railway Act not having been complied with. Five railway acts have been formerly formed to make a railway down this—the Men Valley, where extensive barracks are built, but the preliminary expenses were always first arranged. An Act was obtained a few years ago to continue the Salop railway line to the Shelve Mine, but this Act fell into neglect, as being too late and too expensive, and the associated companies are not yet at work on the mine to be a source of income from the mines of Shropshire, Wood Mine, beyond the Roman Graves, is transferred from one to another company. A company for Lodgegill is in process of formation,Ladywell, who is owner of the present Smokey Mine. Dr. Gillingham, Professor of Chemistry, F.R.S., of the Mason College, Birmingham, and the model made by my father of the district, which obtained a prize medal in the exhibition of 1861, is now in the Museum of Natural History, Jeramy-street, and will be kept in the Shrewsbury Museum.

DRINKER.—The Minsterley Mining Company, which has recently purchased the Hope Valley Mine, gave a dinner recently to the workmen employed in the mine, to which we happened to attend. The chair was taken by Mr. Boulding, and the vice was occupied by Mr. blender. The loyal toasts having been proposed, the vice-chairman gave the "Mines of the District," toasting the name of Captain Oldfield. Mr. Boulding said he had only recently come into the district, but had already formed a very favorable opinion of its mines; they only required developing to make them profitable and prosperous. (Cheers.)—Mr. Captain Oldfield, in replying, said he had only recently come into the district, and was now working with the new machinery, to which the committee had gone, to the advantage of the district. The Minsterley Mining Company, which has recently purchased the Hope Valley Mine, gave a dinner recently to the workmen employed in the mine, to which we happened to attend. The chair was taken by Mr. Boulding, and the vice was occupied by Mr. Blender. The loyal toasts having been proposed, the vice-chairman gave the "Mines of the District," toasting the name of Captain Oldfield. Mr. Boulding said he had only recently come into the district, but had already formed a very favorable opinion of its mines; they only required developing to make them profitable and prosperous. (Cheers.)—Mr. Captain Oldfield, in replying, said he had only recently come into the district, and was now working with the new machinery, to which the committee had gone, to the advantage of the district. The Minsterley Mining Company, which has recently purchased the Hope Valley Mine, gave a dinner recently to the workmen employed in the mine, to which we happened to attend. The chair was taken by Mr. Boulding, and the vice was occupied by Mr. Blender. The loyal toasts having been proposed, the vice-chairman gave the "Mines of the District," toasting the name of Captain Oldfield. Mr. Boulding said he had only recently come into the district, but had already formed a very favorable opinion of its mines; they only required developing to make them profitable and prosperous. (Cheers.)—Mr. Captain Oldfield, in replying, said he had only recently come into the district, and was now working with the new machinery, to which the committee had gone, to the advantage of the district. The Minsterley Mining Company, which has recently purchased the Hope Valley Mine, gave a dinner recently to the workmen employed in the mine, to which we happened to attend. The chair was taken by Mr. Boulding, and the vice was occupied by Mr. Blender. The loyal toasts having been proposed, the vice-chairman gave the "Mines of the District," toasting the name of Captain Oldfield. Mr. Boulding said he had only recently come into the district, but had already formed a very favorable opinion of its mines; they only required developing to make them profitable and prosperous. (Cheers.)—Mr. Captain Oldfield, in replying, said he had only recently come into the district, and was now working with the new machinery, to which the committee had gone, to the advantage of the district.