LXI. A general view of the coal mines worked in France, of their different products, and the means of circulating them

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way; and one man at each end to steer her, and to be ready at the opposite end to take the stern oar when wanted. As, from the construction of the boat, she is always in a position to be rowed either way, without turning the boat, when manned, the person who steers her should be well acquainted with the course of the tides, in order to take every possible advantage: the best method, if the direction will admit of it, is to head the sea. The steersman should keep his eye fixed upon the wave or breaker, and encourage the rowers to give way as the boat rises to it; being then aided by the force of the oars, she launches over it with vast rapidity, without shipping any water. It is necessary to observe, that there is often a strong reflux of sea, occasioned by the stranded wrecks, which requires both dispatch and care in the people employed, that the boat be not damaged. When the wreck is reached, if the wind blows to the land, the boat will come in shore without any other effort than steering.

I would strongly recommend practising the boat, by which means, with experience, the danger will appear less, from the confidence people will have in her from repeated trials.

LXI. *A general View of the Coal Mines worked in France, of their different Products, and the Means of circulating them.* By C. LEFEBVRE, Member of the Council of Mines, of the Philomatic Society, &c. &c.

[Continued from p. 240.]

Department of Ille and Vilaine.

NO coals are dug up in this department. It may receive this fuel by sea in the northern part; and the mines of Montrelais and North, in the department of Loire-Inferieure, may supply the southern part.

Department of Indre.

This department is in the same situation as the preceding in regard to the want of coal mines. It might be supplied from the mines in the department of La Creuse, if the river of that name, which is navigable for boats only to Argentan, were rendered navigable higher up.

If the navigation of the Cher were improved, it might also supply with coals the eastern part of the department of Indre, because the coal mines in the environs of Montlucon would then become an object of importance.

Department

Department of Indre and Loire.

There are no coal mines in this department; but it receives the products of the mines of various departments by the river Loire, which traverses it in its longest direction.

Department of Isère.

The southern part of this department (22) contains some coal mines; and particularly in the environs of the communes of La Motte, Pierre-Chatél, La Mure, Saint-Barthelemi-de-Sechilienne, &c.

They supply a mineral combustible of a moderate quality; but is exceedingly valuable in a country where wood is daily becoming scarcer.

These coal mines are almost all worked in an irregular manner, without attention to the lives of the workmen or to economy.

The annual product of these mines may be estimated at from a million to twelve hundred myriagrammes.

The price at the mines is from 15 to 20 cents per myriagramme; but the difficulty of land-carriage raises the price at Grenoble to from 60 to 80 cents.

Department of Jura.

Several indications of coals have been announced in this department; and some attempts were made to work mines, which gave rise to well-founded hopes: but these attempts are now abandoned, and no mines are worked in this department.

In the present state of things, the mines of Blanzey and Saint-Berain, in the department of Saône and Loire, furnish coals to this department by the canal of Charolois and Doubs. The southern part is supplied from the mines of Rives-de-Gier.

Department of Landes.

Indications of coal have been announced in the neighbourhood of Dax; but from the nature of the soil it is probable that it is fossil wood. As this department has no coal mines worked, it is supplied with this fuel by sea, and particularly from the port of Bayonne.

Department of Loire and Cher.

This department (23) has no coal mines. It receives this fuel by the river Loire from the mines of Haute-Loire and Allier.

Department of Haute-Loire.

Very abundant coal mines are worked in the cantons of Brassac-Sainte-Florine, Freugères, Vergongheon, and Lempdes, the product of which is considerable. That of Grofmenil, situated in the last-mentioned commune, which had been perforated by a number of small pits in such a manner that the strata of coal was inundated, is now in the hands of a company, who are clearing it of water, and making preparations for working it to a greater depth.

There is reason to think, that this mine alone, when in a productive state, will furnish as much as all the other mines of the country do at present. The annual product, however, of the latter is from fifteen to eighteen hundred thousand myriagrammes. These coals are of an excellent quality. The means of their conveyance are the navigation of the Allier and the Loire, the canal of Briare and of the Seine; which gives for their circulation an extent of more than 140 leagues. A large quantity of these coals is consumed at Paris. The mean price of them at the pits is from 15 to 20 cents, and when delivered at Paris from 30 to 40 cents per myriagramme.

Department of La Loire.

The south-east part of this department (24) contains a great number of coal mines, worked in an extent of more than ten miles in length and five or six miles in breadth. The principal communes in which these mines are situated are those of Rives-de-Gier, Saint-Chamond, Saint-Etienne, Le Chambon, Firmini, Roche-Molière, &c.

In consequence of the number and richness of the strata found in these cantons, an immense quantity of this fuel has been extracted for several centuries past; but in order to obtain it sooner, and with more ease, a great many pits have been sunk, by means of which the coals nearest the surface were dug out. The whole country is perforated with these apertures. This irregular method rendered the working of the interior strata much more laborious and expensive.

The present product of the different mines in this department are stated at thirty millions of myriagrammes annually; and this, in all probability, is below the truth. If the mines were better worked, it is certain that the quantity might be quadrupled.

The quality and price of these coals is exceedingly various. Those of the first quality cost at the mine from 10 to 12 cents
per

per myriagramme; those of mean quality are sold for 7 or 8 cents, and the worst for 5.

The medium price of these coals transported to Lyons is 15 or 18 cents per myriagramme: the price at Marfeilles is 35 cents.

Department of La Loire Inferieure.

This department (25), as has been seen, may receive coals from the mines situated towards the upper part of the course of the Loire as well as from those of Allier. The coals of the mine of Decife, which will be mentioned in speaking of the department of La Nievre, are also conveyed to different places on the Loire. The coals also of the mines of Montrelais, situated two or three leagues to the north of Varades and Ingrande, are conveyed on the lower part of the Loire. They are embarked in particular at the latter place to be transported to the communes on the banks of that river descending to Nantes, where the consumption is considerable.

The coals annually extracted from these mines may be safely estimated at a million of myriagrammes. They are of a good quality. The mean price on the spot is 5 cents per myriagramme; when sent to Nantes, the same quantity costs 25 cents.

In this department there are also peat-mosses, the product of which is abundant, and of great utility to the inhabitants. The most considerable are found in the marshes of Montoirs, to the north of Nantes. More than eight thousand individuals are employed in digging peat from these mosses.

Department of Loire and Cher.

There are no mines worked in this department. It receives coals by the Loire, which traverses it; and might consume those also brought by the Cher from the mines situated in the environs of Commentry and Montluçon, in the department of Allier, if the navigation of the Cher were improved.

Department of Loiret.

There are no coal mines worked in this department; but it is abundantly provided with coals by the navigation of the Seine.

Department of Lot.

Abundant coal mines exist in the environs of Figeac, towards the east extremity of this department. They are badly worked by the proprietors of the ground; but they are susceptible of improvement, if means of consumption were opened for their products.

Department of Lot and Garonne.

No coal mines are worked in this department. Those extracted from the mines of Carmeaux, in the department of Tarn, are brought to it on the Garonne; and it receives by the Lot those of the department of that name, which would be supplied much cheaper if the Lot were rendered navigable towards Figeac and the department of Aveyron.

Department of La Lozere.

The discovery of some strata of coal in this country would be of great utility. Wood daily becomes scarcer; and the communication with the coal countries in the neighbouring departments is difficult and expensive.

Several indications of coal have been announced; particularly towards Canourgue, towards Mende, and in the neighbourhood of Meyrney. Some specimens sent to the Council of Mines announce only fossil wood.

Department of Lys.

This department has no coal mines worked. It receives those of the departments of the North and of Jemappes.

Department of La Manche.

There are several indications of coal in this department; and particularly in the Forest of Briquebec, near Valonges; in the commune of Pleffis, near Fretot; in that of Moon, and that of Semilly, in the district of Saint-Lô.

Strata of coal have been found in the commune of Pleffis; but hitherto they are so intermixed with strata of schist, that if worked they would not pay the expenses.

Department of La Marne.

This department, as far as is yet known, has no coal mines. Collections of fossil wood, and of peat exceedingly puritous, are frequently found under strata of marly earth. These substances have often been announced as coal, but they do not possess the qualities of that fuel. They kindle slowly, and become totally incandescent; but they give very little flame, and for the most part none at all. This substance is called by the inhabitants *earth coal*.

The Valley of La Vesle furnishes abundance of peat of an excellent quality. This river, which takes its source on the east of Chalons, passes Rheims and Braine, and discharges itself into the Aisne above Soissons, traversing an extent of eighteen leagues. It every where runs over a bed of peat,
and

and may afford great resources to the neighbouring communes if that substance were properly dug up.

Department of La Haute Marne.

There are no coal mines worked in this department. Several indications of coal have been announced, but hitherto the specimens have turned out to be bituminous fossil wood. This department is at a distance from coal countries, and has on easy communication with them; but it is abundant in wood.

Department of La Mayenne.

This department is supplied with coals by the Loire. Boats can go up the Mayenne as far as Laval; and the Sarthe as far as Mons.

Department of Mayenne and Loire.

There are several small coal pits worked in the canton (26) of Saint-Aubin-de-Luigné, in the territories of Chaudefond, Montjean, and several other places adjacent. They are worked very irregularly, and the product of them is not known.

The mine of Saint-George's-Châteloifon, situated between Vihiers and Doué, to the east of the latter commune, is more important and worked in a more regular manner. The product amounts to about 300,000 myriagrammes per annum; but it might be rendered more considerable.

Department of La Meurthe.

A discovery of coal has been announced in the neighbourhood of Nancy; but the specimens sent were only bituminous fossil wood. At present this department has no coal mines actually worked.

Department of the Meuse.

No coal mines are worked in this department (27). It can receive coals from La Saare by the Moselle, and the canal which communicates with the Meuse between Toul and Pagny: and the coals of the department of Ourthe may be conveyed on the Meuse to its northern part.

Department of La Meuse Inferieure.

This department possesses very important coal mines in the neighbourhood of Rolduc. The annual product of them amounts to more than 13,500,000 myriagrammes; and they are far from being properly worked.

The coals are of different qualities; some of them are very good. Their mean price at the mine varies from 5 to 14 cents

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per

per myriagramme. There is also abundance of peat in the cantons of Heythysen and De Weert.

Department of Mont-Blanc.

There are several coal mines in this country (28). Some are worked in the territory of the communes of Entrevernes near Annecy, Montmin, Novalaise, Servolex, and Petit-Bernard. Indications of coal have been announced also in the canton of Montiers, Cruseilles, Valloires, and Cognin. The annual product of the coal mines worked in this department may be estimated at 120,000 myriagrammes per annum. These mines are susceptible of improvement, but there is no consumption. The price of the coals at the mine is 5 cents per myriagramme.

Department of Mont-Tonnere.

There are more than thirty coal mines known in this department (29). Several of them have been abandoned in consequence of the war. The cantons most abundant are those of Lauterack, Wolfstein, and Obermoschel.

The product of these mines may be estimated at about 425,000 myriagrammes; but if the consumption required, it could be increased. The quality of the coal varies. There is very little of it good; but it is generally used for heating stoves. The price at the mines is 8 cents per myriagramme.

These coals are consumed merely by the wants of the country. A considerable quantity of them is employed for burning lime, either for building or for manure. They are employed also in the fusing of mercury, of which there is very important mines in this department; and for the purposes of evaporation in the salt-works of Kreutznach.

Department of Morbihan.

The Morbihan has no coals. It receives those which are dug up on the banks of the Loire, or of the rivers united with it.

Department of La Moselle.

Some coal mines are worked in this department (30) in the environs of the communes of Ottenbach and in the canton of Petelange. The annual product of them may be estimated at 100,000 myriagrammes at least. The coal is of a very good quality. It costs at the mine 9 cents per myriagramme.

Department of the Two Nethes.

This department has no coal mines; but it is supplied with

with abundance of coal from the mines in the departments of Jemappes and of the North, by the canal of Bruffels and by the Scheidt.

Department of the North.

Very important coal mines are worked at Anzin near Valenciennes, at Frefnes, Raismes, and Vieux-Condé. There is a very considerable one also in the commune of Aniche.

The different mines worked in this department furnish at the least 30,000,000 of myriagrammes. They are of various qualities. Some of them are very good for forging iron; others are preferable for stoves; and some of an inferior quality are proper for burning lime. The price at the mines differs according to the quality. The mean price of good coal is from 12 to 15 cents per myriagramme. When delivered at the ports of Ostend, Dunkirk, and Calais, it costs from 25 to 28, and at Havre from 52 to 55.

The means of consumption for these coals, and particularly for those near Condé and Saint-Amand, are very extensive towards the north, on account of the navigation of the Scheldt, and of the numerous canals which communicate with that river. So that the products of these mines might be conveyed at very little expense as far as Ghent, Bruges, Ostend, Termonde, and Antwerp. They might also be circulated in Holland, and be exported by the ports of Ostend and Dunkirk, so as to become as important an object of maritime commerce as the English coals.

Department of La Nièvre.

Coal mines are worked in the canton of Decize (32), and are very productive. The annual product is estimated at 1,000,000 of myriagrammes, but may be much increased. The quality of these coals is in general such that they must be speedily employed after they are dug up, as they lose considerably by long exposure to the air. The price at the mine is from 8 to 10 cents per myriagramme; and delivered at Paris from 10 to 13. They are conveyed on the Loire, the canal of Briare, the Seine, &c.

[To be continued.]