

operations, however, began to exhaust the forests of England about the beginning of the 17th century, and the British Parliament had to give its serious attention to the question.

In 1740, the production of pig iron in Great Britain was only 17,350 tons, her Iron Industry at this time having been almost destroyed by the decreasing supply of charcoal.

About 1750 mineral coal, in its natural state or in the form of coke, came into notice as a substitute for charcoal. The iron trade of England and Wales at once revived, while that of Scotland may be said to have been actually created by this new fuel.

Great improvements were introduced in the furnace plants of Great Britain, and the Industry from that date forward advanced steadily.

In 1787 the British Government adopted a strong Protective Tariff for their Iron Industries, the duty on pig iron being placed in that year at 67/2 per ton, with higher rates for manufactured iron. This duty on pig iron was later on increased in 1819, and again in 1825, and the Protective Tariff in this department was maintained down to the year 1845.

The effect of the introduction of mineral coal, and of the protective duties levied on foreign iron was most beneficial. The Industry at once showed strength, and from that date continued to grow rapidly, until in 1796 there were 104 furnaces in England and Wales producing 108,793 tons of iron, and in Scotland 17 furnaces producing 16,086 tons.

In 1820, the total production had reached 400,000 tons ; in 1825, 581,367 tons ; in 1840, 1,305,400 tons ; and in 1854, 3,069,838 tons, this quantity being then estimated as fully one-half of the world's production of pig iron.

In 1889, Great Britain's production of pig iron had reached 9,321,563 tons of 2000 lbs. This, with a population estimated at 38,000,000, giving the enormous production of 495 lbs. per head. Of this output Great Britain herself consumes 250 lbs. per capita.

In considering the progress made it is well to remember the various Acts of Parliament enforced from time to time by England to protect her national Iron Industry, by preventing the emigration of her skilled artisans to other countries, by guard-