

A question of considerable importance to coal miners was before the West Riding magistrates at Dewsbury yesterday, in a case in which two deputy stewards, one named Alfred Barker and the other Samuel Balmforth, were charged with assaulting Tom Senior, of Mirfield, collier. The question was whether the men have any right to ascend the shaft except on completion of the labours of the day. Mr. Ibberson, of Dewsbury, was for the complainant, and Mr. Hall, of Wakefield, for the defendants. It appeared that all the parties are employed at Gregory Spring Colliery, Mirfield, which belongs to Howgates, Day, and Holt Limited, and on the 16th inst. they had a dispute as to Senior's working place. This ended in the complainant and another working miner going to the bottom of the shaft and demanding the right to ascend. There is a system in the colliery under which no workman is allowed to go up the shaft unless he has a pass in his possession. This the men had not, but they entered a cage about to ascend with Balmforth. They were ejected, but Senior again got in, and was again turned out, and it was said with some violence. This constituted the assault. The magistrates' clerk advised the Bench that the men had a right to ascend. This being so, the Justices fined the defendants, but they only imposed a nominal penalty. They had a shilling each and the Court fees to pay, no expenses being allowed the complainant and his witnesses.